

"AIRSHIPPING"—THE FUNNY SIDE OF AVIATION.

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THE SMART SET

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**"HALF-
GODS,"**

A Novel by
HELEN R. MARTIN.

Other Contributors:

Richard Le Gallienne,

Melville Chater,

E. Phillips Oppenheim,

Mary Glascöck, Viola Burhans,

Arthur Stringer, Theodosia Garrison.

LONDON

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Ess Ess Publishing Company, 452 Fifth Avenue, New York

PARIS

The SMART SET for DECEMBER

IF we only had the space we'd like to tell you a lot about the magazine—what we're doing, what we're planning to do, what ideas come up from time to time—and what the people say about us. Ah, that would make delicious reading! Some breezy comments float into this office—some critical, some satirically “sassy,” some helpfully suggestive—and lots and lots of them containing the kindest and most appreciative approval of our efforts to produce “the cleverest magazine in America.”

“The Haunted Pajamas,” by Francis Perry Elliott, in our October number, raised a great whoop. “The cleverest thing the SMART SET has had in years”—“I nearly died laughing”—“Please send me another copy: someone borrowed mine; I *must* finish that pajama story”—these are just a few of the splendid comments we received. One lone woman wrote us that she thought it silly—but then you can't please everybody.

“Daphne,” by Wyndham Martyn, brought a lot of letters. One woman, who signs herself “One who has studied music in Paris,” said: “I think the author must be a lovely man. Not only is it a dandy story, but it's a real warning to girls who are crazy to study in Europe. I never read anything more true to life.”

Of course, there have been a few brickbats along with the bouquets—but not many; and we believe the SMART SET during the past few months has met with pretty nearly unanimous approbation.

For December we have in preparation a splendid novelette, “**Creatures of Inheritance**,” by Frederic Brown. The title explains itself—we are all of us “creatures of inheritance.” It's a story of an unhappy marriage—but they eventually find the key that unlocks the vault of human happiness. It's a tale that will strike home to thousands of American families today. Read it and see if it doesn't contain some features that will interest you vitally.

Among other December features are: “**The Underbidder**,” by Eleanor Raeburn—a story of a woman who had to choose between marriage and a career; “**His People**,” by Thomas Samson Miller, a tense “real life” story of caste in England; “**A Confusion of Guideposts**,” in which Elliott Flower shows that a lot of the old maxims are out of date; “**From Frying Pan to Fire**,” by W. A. Roberts, a breezy tale of a man who was “stung,” and other bright, snappy stories by Mabel W. Martin, Frederic Arnold Kummer, May Isabel Fisk and others—not to overlook E. Phillips Oppenheim's great serial “**Havoc**.”

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THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

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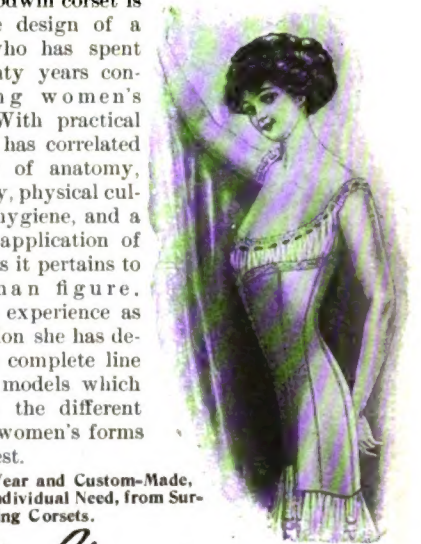
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HALF-GODS

By HELEN R. MARTIN

*From young Mrs. Newbold, of Williamsburg, Pa.,
to Miss Margaret Harding, of Boston.*

WISE beyond your years and experience as you usually are, dear Margaret, your prophecies *this time* are not going to prove true, for I can assure you now, after two months of wedded life, that my marriage is not going to mar the closeness and confidence of our friendship. Perhaps it is strange that the new relation has not built up reserves between you and me. It may mean that I am a very shallow person—does it, Margaret?—or does it mean, perhaps, that our friendship is of the rare sort like a perfect marriage? (“If there *is* such a thing!” I hear you cynically remarking.) Anyway, why should I be reserved with you about my happiness, save in the fear of boring you? To be sure, I suppose if I were finding myself disappointed (a supposition so far from the reality that it looks almost immoral as I write it), I can imagine then that pride might close my heart even to you! But no, I doubt if it could; it seems to be an absolute necessity to me to “discharge the fullness and swellings of my heart” to you, poor victim!

I do not find, as you are always warning me, you sceptic, that “having a high ideal of anyone is incompatible with very close intimacy.” My ideal of Robert seems to grow bigger every day of our life together. You will say that two months of marriage is too short a time to have proven this. But I feel that I couldn’t know him more completely. Wait till your time comes (as come it will, invincible as you think you are to what you so loftily label “the weakness of so-called love,” for you are

too good-looking on the one hand and too much of a woman on the other not to be sought and won eventually), and then you’ll see a whole lot of your untried theories “fade into thin air,” indeed you will!

Oh, my dear, what a lot of apologies you owe me! Don’t you remember the things you used to say about Robert when you and I first met him?—that he was “superficial,” that his character was “not deeply rooted,” that he was “not always quite sincere,” that, “like most artists,” he was “a creature of passing moods and enthusiasms.” You see, I remember them all. But I forgive you freely, in case you’ve now changed your mind.

To turn to a less congenial theme, my present environment. Living with one’s in-laws, I am ready to admit in the light of two weeks’ experience, leaves some things to be desired, though I suppose I ought to “think on my mercies” and be thankful that there are only two of them, two in-laws, not two mercies, for one of them is anything but a mercy! They are Robert’s mother, who is lovely, and his elder brother Eliot, who isn’t so lovely. You know I never would have consented to such an arrangement as this (especially in view of the strange opposition to it which Eliot set up, he never having seen me!) if circumstances had not made it seem unavoidable. And of course we all hope it is only temporary, a matter of a few years, until Robert can afford to bear the expenses of two households, his mother’s and our own. It is so fine of him to consider his mother’s welfare before his own happiness, for naturally he and I would love to be by ourselves. But he feels

he must not leave the whole burden of her support to Eliot, whose salary at the bank isn't any larger than Robert's own income from the Conservatory; and an old lady like Mrs. Newbold, in delicate health, accustomed to every refinement of living, and with tastes quite as fastidious as Robert's, is no small expense in an economical establishment like this, for of course they try to give her everything she needs and wants, and that means pinching in many other places. Except this attractive old stone house on a pretty, shaded street filled with other old romantic looking houses, the Newbolds haven't a thing in the world but what Eliot and Robert earn. So I am puzzled to understand Eliot's having so bitterly opposed Robert's bringing me here to live with them and insisting that if he must marry he must set up a home of his own, since, you see, it is solely for Eliot's sake that we are here. I confess he is the one and only blight upon my happiness, he is such a kill-joy about the house, such an irritable, disagreeable, stern presence. He certainly does not welcome me with enthusiasm! If it were not for Mrs. Newbold's sweetness and kindness, I should feel rather uncomfortable.

But she adores Robert, so I'm sure she loves me for his sake. Eliot, on the contrary, treats me as if I were an intruder. Pleasant, isn't it? Robert and I call him "Merry Sunshine." Not to his face, understand—people don't take liberties with Eliot! As for me, he doesn't admit me to the slightest acquaintance, though living in the same house and sitting at table together three times a day.

"Don't mind poor old Eliot," Robert tells me. "He always goes out of his way to get himself disliked."

This city of Williamsburg, an overgrown manufacturing town of fifty thousand souls, interests me. It is such a new experience to me, who have always lived in a big city where one is known only to one's own small circle, to find myself now recognized on the street by every passer-by as Robert Newbold's bride; to overhear shopgirls, as I pass through a department store, remark,

"That's the wife of that swell baritone of Trinity," or "There goes the girl that's just married the Conservatory principal." You see, the Newbolds have lived here for several generations and have always been an influential family, in spite of the loss of all their former wealth.

I like the social life of the place; it is staid, substantial and quaint, and makes up in dignity and real refinement what it lacks in originality and modernness. And it warms my heart to have everyone take such an extraordinary interest in me because I'm a Newbold. You know, Margaret, how susceptible I am to kindness, having had so little of it in my past! And so it is almost bewildering to me to find myself dined and feted and visited, and taken into the arms of dear old ladies in black silk and old lace and kissed because I'm the new daughter of their lifelong friend, Adelaide Newbold.

"There is such a remarkable sameness about the people," I tell Robert, marveling. "I don't believe there are two women in this town, at least among these 'select' individuals I am meeting, who hold differing views on any subject whatever."

"Don't let out our radical 'views,' dear," he solemnly warns me. "They'd think we were anarchists."

Everyone who calls asks what church we shall attend.

"The Newbolds have always been Episcopalians," they tell me, "but perhaps as Robert sings in the Presbyterian choir—"

"I shall go with him," I say, evading a confession of faith, though to one woman who pressed me, I don't know what devil made me reply experimentally, "I am a Mohammedan."

She looked alarmed and hastened to change the subject.

"If they find out," says Robert, "that you're intellectual, you'll be cut. They'll be afraid of you. They're elegant, but dull. Damned dull, dearest."

"They'll never find it out, for the simple reason that I'm not. What should I be intellectual for?"

"What for, indeed, seeing you're so pretty!" (Don't laugh, Margaret.) "You don't have to be clever if you don't want to."

Of course, these social doings won't keep up indefinitely. They must not, for Robert and I both have our work to do. I am to teach piano and harmony at the Conservatory, afternoons, and oversee the housekeeping in the mornings, relieving Mrs. Newbold of that burden which she is very glad to be rid of, as it was really too much for her age and feebleness. A busy, delightful life, I call it.

Robert has, of course, all the pipe-organ and voice-culture pupils. Then we have a teacher of violin and another of the history of music. Robert lectures once a week, and we have monthly recitals given by the Faculty, which are social events in Williamsburg.

Margaret, I don't believe there ever were two brothers more unlike than Robert and Eliot. Robert, as you know, is nothing if not polished. Eliot, on the other hand, prides himself, I think, on his brusqueness, his unpleasant defying of conventions. He seems to have a contempt for Robert's fastidiousness.

"Eliot thinks if a fellow isn't a boor he's effeminate," says Robert. "He probably thinks there's nothing worth while in you, Edith, since you were fool enough to fall in love with his polite but futile brother."

While Robert is amiable, considerate, courteous, Eliot is simply disagreeable to everyone but his mother; I admit he's lovely to her. Robert is generous, open-hearted; Eliot is saving almost to meanness (never, however, where his mother is concerned; I've found that out even in two weeks, and one must give the devil his due); Robert is pernickety-nice about his dress; Eliot is careless about his, though he's a good-looking chap rather, awfully dark, with thick, coal black hair, black eyes, pale, clean shaven face and well shaped hands. Interesting looking, on the whole.

There are points at which these two brothers do touch; they are both men of attainments and ability, in our sense of those attributes, Margaret,

not the ability to make money, but to *live*. Both of them have the sort of knowledge and the quality of tastes, which make life rich and worth while. Indeed, Eliot impresses me as having one of the keenest minds I've ever met.

But while, as you know, people are universally attracted to Robert, hardly anyone likes Eliot, though he is not wanting in personal magnetism—I realize that. I also realize that if Robert were not very level-headed, he would be half ruined with the flattery people give him. Only yesterday a sentimental girl, one of his pupils, had the audacity to ask him for a lock of his hair!

"Certainly," he told her, "I'll ask my wife to cut it off for you."

Wasn't that like him?

Here's a sample of Eliot's amiability toward his neighbors. An elderly woman, a very vigorous spinster, was having tea yesterday with his mother, and she happened to ask Eliot: "Didn't I see you passing my house this afternoon?"

"No; I always avoid going up that block, there are so many old maids sitting at the windows!"

"And if there were more men like you in the world," retorted the spinster, "there would be more old maids sitting!"

He professes to be a woman hater. Did you ever hear of anything more silly?

"Did someone jilt him?" I asked Robert.

"No; it's a pose, acquired from reading Bernard Shaw probably," says Robert.

"It seems too earnest to be a pose, Robert."

"Eliot's conceit dulls his sense of humor."

"The only notice he ever takes of *me*," I said, "is strenuously to ignore me." (Robert finds the Irish streak in me so diverting that I am studiously cultivating it.) "And when not ignoring me, he is delivering himself of epigrammatic remarks, *à la* Bernard Shaw, on the general idiocy of my sex, which I do not flatter him by noticing, Robert."

"Your attitude toward the old boy

is just right, dear," Robert assures me. "You are perfectly nice to him because he is my brother and lives with us. Otherwise he is to you a quite negligible quantity."

"Didn't he ever care for girls as other young men do? He seems to shun them so."

"He declares that if he so much as notices a girl she throws herself at him; *à la* Shaw again, you see."

"If he were not your brother, I'd call him a cad, Robert."

"Don't let that stop you, dear."

"I long to show him my disdain!"

"That would flatter him too much, for you couldn't possibly convince him that you meant it."

"Wait and see," I nodded.

And now, dear, I must stop rambling on to you and correct a pile of harmony papers. But in my next, I hope to be able to give you an entertaining account of how I did convince Eliot that I "meant it."

Always with a heart full of love for you, dear Margaret,

EDITH.

II

A WHOLE month since I've written to you, dear Margaret! But I have been so busy at the Conservatory; and running a house with only one domestic, the spoiled old black family retainer who does not like dictation from the newcomer and whom I have to handle most judiciously (repressing, the while, a savage yearning to inflict medieval tortures upon her!); this, too, consumes time. Let me say, however, that this old black Abigail is sometimes a source of real joy to me, as, for instance, today when she indignantly told me apropos of the boycott on meat, "Thank Gawd, I's always been a straight woman—I's never taken up with any of the new religions, Christian Science, Woman's Suffrage, Spiritualism or the Beef Trust!"

Another thing that has kept me so long from writing to you is that I've been off on a flying visit with Robert to Philadelphia to hear the Orchestra. From Philadelphia we couldn't resist the temptation to run on to New York

to hear Grand Opera. I felt guilty in so much extravagant self-indulgence, for I happened to know that Eliot had refused to go with a friend of his to hear the Orchestra (he, too, is passionately fond of music) because the doctor had ordered champagne for his mother and he couldn't afford both. But we have been so prosperous at the Conservatory that Robert thought we could afford a bit of fun. I'm proud to tell you that the number of piano pupils has actually doubled since I came! My "methods," or my clothes or *something* seems to take with the pupils, and I have the joyful satisfaction of knowing that I'm helping to make Robert's Conservatory a success.

Robert says, poor deluded man, that it's my "womanly charm," but I tell him it's my New York trousseau. Am I awfully flat, dear, to repeat Robert's pleasing remarks to you? But the temptation is so great, you must bear with my weakness. It's so grand to be treated like a heroine in a novel! I wonder, now, how I ever got along without it.

But I was going to tell you about our jaunt to the city. Robert thought I was overdoing—he told Eliot so—and needed a few days' vacation. In New York we did a thing I'm ashamed of; we stopped for three days at that wickedly luxurious St. Regis. You see, Robert, like most artistic people, will spend money if he has it in his pocket, whether he can afford it or not, and in spite of my protests, he would go to the St. Regis.

"Because I think the very best not too good for you," he argued.

A very creditable sentiment, to be sure, though I protested that I really hated big expensive hotels. But he declared he would engage the famous Royal Suite if it were not already occupied!

His next piece of reckless extravagance was to buy me a sealskin coat; for the pleasure, he said, of seeing that soft rich brown against my fairness, and so forth (don't laugh, you who know what an absolutely commonplace looking thing I am!)

Well, Robert has a task on his hands now, trying to train me to act as if I were used to a sealskin coat; for instance, to fling it carelessly over the back of a chair when I take it off.

"Oh, Robert," I protest, "don't ask the impossible of me! I can't be so underhanded as to pretend to treat that sealskin coat carelessly!"

"Practice," he insists. "Practice makes perfect, you know."

But I've not worn the coat once since we came back, I have such a cowardly dread of Eliot's seeing it—because—well, for sundry reasons. You see, he doesn't care what he says to anybody, nor how hard he "sits on" people whom he doesn't like or approve of. Why, for example, today at luncheon he related to us how he had "squelched" the Y. M. C. A. secretary, a sentimentally pious young man who has been trying to get both Eliot and Robert to join him in taking a lot of equally pious young boys on early morning walks every Monday. I believe they are supposed to carry their Bibles with them and start in time to see the sunrise! It seems that this estimable secretary came into Eliot's bank today to urge his case, and Eliot, to get rid of him once for all, said: "You see, Mr. Atwater, I'm always out so late Sunday night, carousing, that I wouldn't be able to get up in time on Monday to go with you and your boys. And I haven't any Bible anyway."

Poor Mr. Atwater went away, Eliot says, "looking white about the gills."

"And I don't think, Rob," added Eliot, "that you and I will be bothered soon again with that sleek and oily man of God."

As for me, all my most proper and creditable opinions he treats with perfectly ruthless sarcasm. When, one day, I harmlessly remarked that I thought all art should be wrought with a high moral purpose or ideal—he hooted!

"That shows that you haven't the first instinct of an artist!" he leered at me. "A true artist has no conscious purpose in his work but to express, in forms of beauty, life as he sees it. To be sure, all great Art lifts us 'i' the scale.' But your point of view is that of the

middle class British matron whose god is Propriety; it is bourgeois!"

He was simply abusive, Margaret. I am learning to conceal my feeble opinions from him, as I'm sure they are hardly robust enough to survive such rigorous treatment. Yesterday when Robert, at dinner, asked me what I thought about some philosophical theory under discussion, I promptly answered (for Eliot's benefit), "You'll be shocked to hear it, Robert, but *I never think.*"

This evening I had my long awaited opportunity to show this brother-in-law of mine how much, in my opinion, he over-estimates himself and what "a negligible quantity" I consider him.

Robert had gone out to choir rehearsal; I had helped Mrs. Newbold to bed and had then gone to the piano in the parlor, where I was sitting in the dark, playing for my own amusement, and I never saw or heard Eliot come into the room, until, after a considerable time when I stopped, he suddenly loomed up in the dark and came across the room to the piano.

"I never heard you play before," he remarked, not in the cold, half irritable tone he has always used to me, but gently, as he speaks to his mother.

"But you have heard me play Robert's accompaniments."

"That—yes. Tonight you *played!* I'd no idea it was in you."

"Indeed!" I smiled ironically, then turned away indifferently and began to play in a rambling fashion. "You do have a way of paying 'back-handed' compliments, don't you?" I flung at him as I tripped about over the keys. "You'd no idea it was in me! I did not look it! Thank you!"

"Yes, you do look it. It's all there in your eyes. I thought your eyes lied."

"A gratuitous assumption! Why do you prefer to think the worst of people until you've proved it?"

"What more convincing proof would a man want than the fact that you'd married my exquisite brother?"

"That fact proved me a nonentity, did it?" I inquired, vastly amused.

"It proved, or seemed to, that you had no more discernment than the rest of the herd who invariably fall in love with him, ask for locks of his hair and are ready to kiss his shoes!"

"You are not bothered with any such infatuated damsels, I presume?"

"Don't 'presume.' When a woman 'presumes' she should begin to wear black silk frocks and neat white aprons. And such a garb wouldn't go with your eyes or your playing. How does it happen, by the way, that a woman capable of such an expression of herself as you've betrayed to me this evening should be so mentally cloudy as to be taken in by a fellow like Rob?"

"I'm not 'so mentally cloudy as to be taken in by a fellow' like you, though, my dear," I laughed. "Come, come; you take yourself so seriously, you know."

"The mystery is," he went on, not at all crushed by my amused contempt, which I thought not only withering but dreadfully audacious, "that you seem infatuated with him yet. Oh, he has his points of course. Rob's not a bad fellow of his kind. But his kind isn't your kind. That's my point."

"Rather an unbrotherly point, don't you think?"

"If there's anything in you, you're bound to find Rob out sometime. So I'm not hurting him."

"What is there to find out?" I asked with airy indifference, still playing.

"Oh, only that he isn't a little tin god on wheels, that's all. Now play me that Chopin Nocturne again, will you?"

He flung himself into a big lounging chair, and I played to him there in the dark for a long time, until Robert came in.

He is a peculiar fellow, don't you think so, Margaret? I wonder whether it can be that he is jealous of Robert. Mrs. Newbold tells me that from their childhood up people have always preferred Robert to Eliot. She herself shows such a marked preference that I am sometimes half sorry for Eliot, for he is so good to her and so self-denying for her. Here is an instance: when, two weeks ago, Robert bought a new baby

grand piano for his private use here at home, Eliot, who plays the piano a bit himself, was eager to move their old upright piano into his bedroom.

"For," said he, "with two professional musicians in the house, I can never get a whack at the piano in the parlor."

But Mrs. Newbold objected. "The evening is the only time you have to play, Eliot, and as I go to bed directly after dinner and your room is so close by, it would disturb my rest quite too much, I am afraid, my dear."

Eliot, who is always perfectly meek with her, though such a hyena with other people, gave it up without a word; but I could see that he was keenly disappointed.

Now I am sure that had it been Robert who wanted that piano in his room, his mother would never have told him he could not have it, no matter what distress it would have cost her.

Last week, as four new piano pupils came in and we needed another piano, we moved that upright one over to the Conservatory. And then, the other day, Robert let drop that it had been bought by Eliot with his first year's savings out of his bank salary.

"Aren't we paying him for it, then?" I asked.

"It isn't a piano I'd buy," said Robert. "And I hardly think he'd accept rent for it from us."

"Don't you think we ought at least to speak to him about it, Robert? We just coolly appropriated it without even a 'by your leave!'"

"I'll say something to him about it," Robert promised.

If he forgets it, I'll try to get up courage to broach it myself.

I had to drop this letter last Monday to go to the Conservatory and, since then, we've been going through a little ordeal here which has made it impossible for me to take up a pen again until now.

Robert got it into his head a few days ago that we could save expense by turning his mother's house into our Conservatory; it is a very large house with lots of unoccupied rooms. Our Conserva-

tory rent is a big item. At first the idea commended itself to me and we decided to talk it over with his mother at dinner.

"With your mother and Eliot," I said.

"Eliot hasn't anything to do with it, dearie."

"But, Robert, hasn't he something to do with any change that might be made in the home which he helps to keep up?" I suggested.

"He doesn't do much more than pay his board, dear, and mother owns the house."

But when the matter was mentioned, I saw at once how distasteful it was to Mrs. Newbold.

As for Eliot, he turned white with anger. But he said nothing at first. He looked as though he couldn't trust himself to speak.

"It would take away all our privacy, I'm afraid, dear," Mrs. Newbold said to Robert, distressed as she always is when she has to refuse him the slightest thing he wants.

"But I'd have a separate entrance made to the Conservatory side of the house, mother. Our home privacy should not be trespassed upon in the least."

"The heating of the whole house would take so much coal and would necessitate our hiring a man to keep the furnace. Abigail could not do it. You see, your Conservatory fires and cleaning were all attended to by the janitor of your building. Abigail couldn't clean the whole—"

"I know, I know, dear," Robert soothingly assured her, for she looked terribly worried. "I'd take care of all that, of course. You shouldn't be worried with it. The wages of a man and the extra coal would not amount to a third of what our present rent comes to."

"May I ask," Eliot broke in sarcastically, "whether you are proposing to pay your mother any rent?"

"Nonsense, Eliot!" Mrs. Newbold gently chid her first born, for in any contention between the two boys she invariably sides with Robert, no matter where lies the justice in the case. Fem-

inine, isn't it? "As if I would let Robbie pay me rent!" she went on. "I'll be only too glad to save him expense if it can be done without—without *too* much tearing up and changing!" she faltered, looking fairly ill at the prospect. "You do so much for me, dear," she turned to Robert, "I must not be selfish and stand in your way when you work so hard," and so forth. Her sympathy fairly overflowed.

Eliot's breaking in had just turned the scale for Robert. I really believe that all Robert has to do to get his mother to concede anything he wants is to broach it before Eliot and let him oppose it.

Eliot probably realizes this, for he said no more, evidently considering that the matter was settled. So it was left to me to remind Mrs. Newbold of her objections to hearing a piano at night, which she would have to do constantly if we brought the Conservatory here.

"I'm afraid, Robert," I spoke up at once, "that we didn't consider this thing very much before we suggested it. It seems out of the question to me now. Your mother could never get away from the sound of pianos day or night, and you know she felt she could not stand even one on the second floor when Eliot wanted his own piano in his room." (I saw Eliot's lips twitch as I spoke, though he did not look at me.) "I see now," I went on, "as I didn't when we talked of it, that it would be asking altogether too much of your mother."

Perhaps I was tactless and too impulsive, for, for the first time since I've known him, Robert looked annoyed with me.

"That's for me to judge, dear," he said, and his tone made me drop the discussion at once.

Since then, Robert and I—well, if we were not both extraordinarily amiable (as you know) and very much in love, probably we should have had our first quarrel. For I have held my ground, gently but firmly, against moving the Conservatory.

"It seems to me, Robert, that we haven't the least right to use your mother's house for our purposes and not pay

rent for it. It isn't as though she did not need money."

"Then we'll pay rent for it."

"But what, then, would we save by moving?" I wondered at him.

You see, Margaret, like most artists, he is boyish and wants what he wants, and can't see anything but that one thing. I had to be really obstinate and tell him that my conscience would never let me teach here in this house where his invalid mother would be made to suffer by it. And as I have more than half of all the pupils of our school, of course poor Robert had to give it up.

"Here's the hitch in Jane's character," he quoted at me as he met my invincible front, which made our dispute end in a laugh, and all was peace and pleasantness. For there never was a more good-natured boy than Robert. If he had not the amiable, winning disposition he has he could not get on, without quarreling, with such a "grouchy" brother as Eliot, could he?

"My heart leaps up as I behold" that tomorrow being Wednesday, I shall get your weekly letter. If you knew what those letters mean to me! No indeed, my life is not too full to need you, Margaret. I am convinced that if perchance on some Wednesday morning I should fail to receive your "biscuit," as Robert calls the thick envelope that he hands to me at breakfast once a week, so much would I miss the stimulus that I'd flop, morally, mentally and physically.

Your
EDITH.

III

LET me try, dear, to clear up some of the things that you say are a bit hazy to you, the personality of my mother-in-law; my relation to her; my everyday life; the home atmosphere of this house.

Well, I am sure Robert and Eliot must get their talents from their father, for Mrs. Newbold, while intelligent and appreciative, is not brilliant enough to account for her sons. She is womanly and motherly, dainty and pretty. All day long she sits or lies in a combination

couch and chair which stands in the bay window of our cosy, sunny library on the second floor front, a table beside her holding flowers, sewing basket, magazines, books and her medicines. Here she receives her friends, and here her devoted children always come the moment they enter the house. As she goes to bed directly after dinner, it is here in this pleasant room that Robert and I can be alone together the few evenings that we are both at home and unoccupied. Eliot, fortunately, prefers his own society in his own room.

Yes, indeed, Mrs. Newbold does "create a home atmosphere," which I am sure is as essential to my well-being as you say it is to yours.

As for my relation with her, it is altogether a pleasant and comfortable one, though neither deep nor vital; for her personality, though attractive, is slight. But never having known my own mother, I delight in her gentle mothering of me as a cat likes to be stroked. I delight equally in daughtering her, in seeing after her little dainty needs, waiting upon her, petting her. So you see, except for Eliot's standoffishness, we have the happiest, most peaceful home life possible.

We are invited to more social doings than either of us cares about, yet we enjoy it when we do go. We make it a rule to decline all bridge whist invitations; the game is too fatally fascinating, and Robert says: "I can't run two professions and do justice to either one of them, so I'll stick to music."

I opened my eyes at your getting the impression from my letters that I take "an undue interest" in my brother-in-law! But I don't think anyone could live in the house with Eliot Newbold and not find him "interesting," whatever else one might find him.

He has not been so curt and disagreeable to me since that night I played for him, and since I averted the catastrophe of having this dear old home turned into a public conservatory. Still, he doesn't at all believe in me and he lets me know it. He simply can't believe in a woman who believes in Robert. Not that he actually hates his

brother. I am sure that even he cannot wholly resist Robert's charm and loveliness, and that he has a certain sort of brotherly affection for him.

"I rub him the wrong way," Robert amiably explains to me, "which, as you've observed, Edith, isn't hard to do. I excite his derision (also a quite easy feat, as you've experienced). You, being a vital part of me, naturally come in for your share of this wholesale disapprobation."

Of late it has seemed to me as though Eliot were watchful of me, like a cat ready to spring if the mouse protrude so much as its nose. I think, for instance, that he would be gratified by my attention to his mother's comfort if he were not half suspicious of it. At least so it appears to me.

But don't worry; I'm not taking an undue interest in anyone. I'm too busy being interested in the problem of husbands. I'm beginning to discover a lot of things about them, how they have to be handled with care because breakable as crystal; or, like dogs, stroked the right way lest they snap; must not be questioned about business or anything else which they consider their own private prerogative lest they snub you for being meddlesome. These peculiarities of the species do cause me occasional anxiety. For Robert is dreadfully unpractical and unbusinesslike, which you know I am not. I wish he would let me manage the business end of our Conservatory; but far from consenting to that, I'm not even told anything about it, so I never feel sure how we are faring financially.

This business carelessness of Robert's is one of the things that tries Eliot so much, for he is all method, as of course a banker has to be. And Robert's heedlessness about the expenses they are supposed to bear in common is really a heavy cross to Eliot, and I confess it isn't a light one to me. But I seem helpless to deal with it, for Robert is either bored or irritated when I try to get him to talk business, and as I don't like making myself unpleasant, I've about washed my hands of responsibility in it, though it is inconvenient never

to know whether or not one can afford a thing.

(Two days later.)

I have been having rather a harrowing experience, which probably accounts for the fact that I've been home from the Conservatory all day today, in bed with a nervous headache. Robert has just carried away the tray from which we had our dinner together in our room; it was so cosy, and so dear of him to insist upon dining with me up here.

He is out at choir rehearsal now; so, as I'm feeling much better since I've eaten something, I'll finish this letter which I began two days ago.

The thing happened last night. Robert had an engagement which kept him out late, and I had gone to bed early. But finding that I could not sleep, I had slipped into bathrobe and slippers and gone down to the piano. When I got there, however, I realized that my playing might bring Eliot downstairs from his room and I could not be seen with my hair down my back, with stockingless, albeit slippered feet, and with my *robe de nuit* trailing below my kimono. So I was about to go back to my room, either to read, or to write to you, until Robert should come home, when suddenly I realized that Robert and Eliot were talking together in the hall just outside the parlor door. There was no way of escape for me and I heard all that they said.

If it were not that you are to me only like another consciousness, of course I could not write you of these things. I wonder whether the time will come when I shall have to call a halt. Well, I shall forge ahead now, if only for my own relief.

"Look here, Rob," I heard Eliot say authoritatively, "it's got to be one thing or the other, you pay up or I quit."

"I'll pay up when it suits me. I can't now. I had to pay fifty dollars on my new piano or they'd have taken it back."

"You had no right to buy it until you could first see your way clear to paying your board and your wife's."

"It's certainly not your affair, Eliot;

to determine for me what I have a right to buy."

"It's my affair, I think you will have to admit, not to let myself be 'done' even by you. When you don't pay your board and your wife's, I pay it."

"I'll pay it when I can, I told you."

"You told me, yes, frequently if not oftener. I foresaw and foretold just how it would be if you married and lived here. You'd leave me to foot all the bills as you always had done, while you bought pianos, sealskin coats, took trips to New York to hear Grand Opera, indulged—"

"O rats! I'm too dog-tired to stand here and wrangle at this time of night about a thing I can't help anyway. Postpone it till morning if you must talk. I've been teaching since eight o'clock this morning."

"That's always your answer, I always choose an inconvenient time. When is it ever convenient to you to discuss with me your obligations to me, or to meet them?"

"I tell you I'll give you some money when I have some. You talk as though I never paid anything toward the expenses. You know perfectly well that I make payments when I can."

"Look here, Robert, I stood your delinquencies pretty patiently before your marriage. But you know how I warned you, that if you persisted in your determination to bring your wife here, you would at least have to do what you never had done—be a *man*, pay your own way and do it regularly and promptly, and not sponge on me. You promised, and have not (as I foresaw) kept your promise. In fact, the reason you insisted upon coming here, instead of setting up for yourself, was because you thought you could impose on me as you couldn't on other creditors!"

"Thanks, thanks," said Robert pleasantly.

"And you even thought to foist on me the expenses of the Conservatory here in this house! You thought I'd be fool enough, as usual, to pay your coal and janitor bills when it suited you better to use your money for other things! You'd have carried it out, too, if your wife had not put her foot down."

"Tut, tut!" Robert laughed. "My wife doesn't 'run' me, you know."

"Well, Robert," Eliot said conclusively, "you had your warning in plenty of time, that if you failed me, I'd quit."

"Then quit, in Heaven's name."

"Which will leave you in the extraordinary position of being obliged to pay for the food you eat. You aren't used to it, Robbie!"

With that I heard Eliot's step (I can always distinguish his tread from Robert's stroll, so to speak) go down the hall and up the stairs, followed, presently, by Robert's.

I stood still, too frozen with horror to move, for in that moment it seemed to me, Margaret, as though the most dreadful tragedy had happened to me. Shame and misery seemed to cover and crush me.

When presently I began to thaw out a bit, it was even worse. Such a conflict of torments! At one moment indignant with Robert; the next resentful toward Eliot; then pitying both of them with all my soul, while suffering agonies of mortification in realizing that Eliot regarded my board here as an imposition upon him.

I could see now why Eliot had treated me as he did when I first came. No wonder! Who could blame him?

And yet, Margaret, I couldn't be wholly indignant with Robert. In my soul I know (and it's not the blindness of love) he is as honorable as Eliot. He is simply heedless, irresponsible, self-indulgent. They are the faults of his lovable temperament. In one sense he has never grown up.

After a while I crept miserably upstairs to our room. I did not tell Robert I had heard. What was the use?

But it was this episode that laid me up with the worst nervous headache I ever had.

Being laid up, however, sometimes has its compensations, in this case it brought out unexpectedly the friendliness of our old Abigail to me. She waited on me so nicely all day, and when she brought me a most dainty luncheon which I could not touch, I was so pleased with the attention that I promised

to give her fifty cents for her trouble as soon as I could get up.

"Oh, don't let that worry you, Miss; I ain't even studyin' about it," said she.

And now I dread to think of the ordeal before me tomorrow, for I must talk over this matter of our expenses with Eliot.

Tell me, Margaret, how you would meet such a snarled-up place as this in your career?

Yours in the blues,

EDITH.

IV

YOUR letter was such a comfort and strengthening to my weak spirit, Margaret. Your kindly view of Robert is the true view. What might appear at first sight to be glaring faults, are really only rather unfortunate idiosyncrasies of temperament, for which he is to be pitied and borne with, rather than censured.

How astonished he would be, by the way, to know that I found him in any least sense an object of "pity"! He thinks himself altogether enviable, because, forsooth, he has *me* for his life's mate! He declares he finds himself commiserating all other men of his acquaintance because they aren't in his shoes!

Now, to get it off my mind, I'll tell you about my interview with Eliot.

Robert and I are together so constantly that you've no idea how difficult I found it to see Eliot alone, unknown to Robert. But last evening, Robert being deep in a book in the library, I decided to go downstairs to the piano and do the Lorelei act (with, unavoidably, some radical departures from the original rôle—I didn't, for instance, dress for the part, or rather undress, and let down my "golden hair"). I knew that if I played a melody "potent and strange," Eliot, from his room above the parlor would hear, be "seized with a wild delight" and be lured thither. Well planned, wasn't it?

Sure enough, it wasn't long before he strolled into the dimly lighted parlor, his hands in his pockets, his black hair rumpled up as it always is when he's

been reading—I've no doubt he had left an interesting book to come and listen to me. It's pretty complimentary, for he says he never listens to "amateurish playing" when he can help it.

I gave him at least a half hour of "the harmony of sweet sounds." Then, my heart thumping miserably, I went and sat down before him to open up the horrid discussion I had to have with him.

But before I could begin, he spoke.

"Do you know your playing is unique? It has distinction, a quality all its own. It seems to express the very essence of feminineness."

"Is it so 'sex-limited' as that?" I asked, rather appalled.

"I don't mean that as disparagement, though perhaps from the standpoint of Art it is such. But your playing so absolutely expresses the feminine that it's almost weirdly alluring to the male, my dear!"

I sighed as I realized that such agreeable conversation as this had to be set aside for so unattractive a theme as the price of one's daily bread.

"I wanted to speak to you," I plunged in, my voice actually weak, "about our expenses here. I am so troubled to know that we are not meeting them. There is no reason why we should not; the Conservatory is prospering, as you know. I have tried often to talk with Robert, but he is so impossible when it comes to a business proposition. What shall I do? Can you suggest anything? We can't—I can't—go on in this irresponsible way."

"That is a matter that lies between Robert and me. You have nothing to do with it."

I knew at once from his tone that he never dreamed I had heard him and Robert the night before. And of course he knew well enough that Robert had not repeated their talk to me. So he did not realize the extent of my knowledge as to how matters stood.

"I do have something to do with the fact that I am living here at your expense," I faltered.

"Oh, no you are not. Robert pays something now and then. In a haphazard way of course, but that's his way

always, you know. Don't distress yourself about it."

"I know that we are in your debt and that we are getting deeper in all the time."

"That's for Robert and me to settle," he repeated. "Dismiss it from your mind."

"How can I?" I demanded, catching my lower lip to check a sob.

"But what's the use of this?" he asked kindly. "Distressing yourself about it isn't going to alter anything. Robert has taken your happiness into his keeping, let *him* do the worrying."

"And meantime, I live here on sufferance, a burden to you."

"Hercules holding up the globe!" he mocked me. "There, there—play to me now and then, as you did tonight, and I'll never call you a burden on my back or any other bad names, except a fool for falling in love with Rob when you might have—"

He hesitated, and I sweetly inquired, "When I might have waited until I met you, were you going to say? It was thoughtless of me."

"Very. Only that isn't what I was going to say."

"How embarrassing! What, then?"

"When, with your talents, you might have done so much better than kill yourself by 'taking a boy to raise,' as a husband."

"Robert is older than I."

"That's a mere detail. Robert is and always will be a cherub."

"Your opinion of Robert as a topic of conversation between you and me is, to put it mildly, uninteresting. To return to the pleasant subject we were discussing, I wish you would take me seriously. What I want is to know whether you and I can't come to some arrangement. I myself have one half of all the pupils of the Conservatory. I earn at least a hundred dollars a month, reckoning from the fact that the other teachers being men and therefore paid at a higher rate, each get about a hundred dollars. But the trouble is, while Robert is the very soul of generosity to me, I am not, like his other teachers, paid a salary—and so I—I don't know *what*—"

"Yes, yes, there, there! I understand—don't inflict it upon yourself to try to tell me. Believe me," he said, coming and standing beside my chair, "that, while for Robert's own sake I'd be glad to see him as fastidious about his debts as he is about his comforts, I am by no means being imposed upon; that I am quite capable of taking care of my own rights—without your help, thank you, my dear—and that there is not a thing in the world for you to bother about. Believe me. Good night!"

With that he walked out.

Chivalrous, wasn't it?

Tell me what you think of it. And now I find I can't write another word tonight.

Your loving
EDITH.

V

I've been in a state bordering on delirium, Margaret, ever since the news reached me that your book had been accepted. I've always known you'd be great some day. And now you'll also be rich—in your own right, I mean.

"She'll be investing and 'opening a Plant,' or whatever it is that people do who have capital," I said to Robert when I told him your wonderful news. "It's well I have no Shares (aren't they called?) for I don't know what they are and should be sadly confused if suddenly called upon to 'claim' one of those things which, while non-existent, yet are Property. How I wish, Robert, I'd been educated in all those mysteries, stocks, bonds, shares, almanacs, time tables, levers and ground plans—gracious! How much is black darkness to my feather brain!"

"I don't wish you'd been 'caught young and trained' to one iota's difference from just what you are—*You!*"

At all events, Margaret, you'll be investing—and then we'll grow apart, for I shall not speak the same language.

I've been wondering much of late, my dear, how you, a maiden, ever came by some of the knowledge of married life that you have so often poured into my interested, though I confess unbelieving, ears. Do you remember how you used

to tell me that you were firmly convinced a woman could not follow a large vocation, one that taxed her powers of soul, mind and body, and at the same time fulfill her specific function of wife, mother and home maker?

Fine talk, I thought it, really eloquent; but oratory and nothing more. But, Margaret, life is teaching me some things heretofore undreamed of. Love, instead of developing one's talents, is so satisfying that one forgets one has any talents. What will you think of the fact that I find the baby clothes I am making so absorbing, so fascinating, that to lay them by a few hours to pursue my "large vocation" at the piano, bores me to extinction. I am finding out, you see, that the largest vocation in the world does not satisfy the soul as love does.

But, here's the complication: it was our common vocation that drew Robert and me together, and now if I grow indifferent to and slight that vocation, am I not in danger of weakening "the tie that binds"?

"But, Robert," I told him one day when he was protesting against my letting my music slide as I've been doing, "it is only that the music in me is going out in a fuller, a more beautiful expression than I ever knew before!"

I'm afraid, however, that he does not see it so; that he is fretted, even a bit disappointed, by what seems to him my apathy, my absolute commonplaceness. I fancy his saying to himself these days: "Is *this* what I'm tied to—a domestic little housewife, without fire, imagination, or aspiration—I, an artist!" Tragic for him, isn't it?

Lest you, too, be moved to censure me, dear, for letting myself "sink i' the scale," let me tell you that I find myself just now unable to bear any least strain upon brain or nerves. If I force myself beyond a certain point, I go to pieces nervously.

"Fight it," Robert says, "or you'll have a stupid child!"

The doctor and my own intuitions say, "Let Nature be your guide."

I still do my work at the Conservatory, though Robert has engaged a sub-

stitute for me, whom I shall simply assist, doing only what I feel able to do.

(*Two days later.*)

The substitute has arrived and oh, what a creature! She is only twenty-three years old and she has the seriousness and maturity of forty!

Her playing is so satisfying, somehow, it seems to come from the deeps in her and to reach the deeps in her hearers. She impresses me as being a most unusual personality, beautiful, brilliant and strangely magnetic.

"You are wonderful!" I found my astonished self saying straight to her the very first evening I knew her.

"It is Henry James, isn't it," she smiled, "whose characters are telling each other on every page that they are 'wonderful'?"

"And you never thought to meet it in 'real life'? Neither did I—it's been surprised out of me. I always thought it such an impertinence in Henry James's people." Her laugh is so delicious, so lovable. Yet, if she has a fault, it is that she could not be light if she tried. That really is a serious fault, you know. It's not one of my conspicuous ones.

Her manner, sweet and grave, and her voice, low-pitched and rich, are both significant of her character, which is, in a word, *large*. One simply could not associate anything petty with the thought of her, and yet she's so preëminently womanly. She dined with us last night, and we were so fascinated with her that we kept her until midnight; we just could not let her go.

It happened that Eliot was not home to dinner. I wish he had been. I wish he could have heard her talk, he who has such a contempt for feminine intelligence. She's "broad" enough to satisfy even his radicalism, I think. She said last night that the Bible is no longer an "authority" even to "so-called Christians." For those of its precepts that we have not outgrown, we have not yet grown up to—such as, "Sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor." We are only just beginning faintly to sense Jesus's radical theory of the "brotherhood of man."

But in spite of her own radicalism, she is, unlike Eliot, so reasonably charitable toward the conservative. When I remarked that I found it a bit difficult to adjust myself to the circumscribed ideas of a place like Williamsburg, she said at once:

"But I think if we delve below the surface we can always find a common meeting ground with *any* fellow being, of whatever station, of whatever mental development. That is why I have absolutely no patience with snobbishness of any kind. A snob seems to me to be just one who is not sure of himself. Let one be deeply rooted in life, and he must lose sight of mere external discrepancies!"

Yet my instinctive feeling about her is that she would be incapable of coming down from her own altitude to meet any one an inch below her. Her theory does her credit, however.

"Wait until Eliot meets *her*!" I said to Robert when he returned from taking her to her apartment. "She'll put his cynical theories to the test, and thaw his icy stoicism to our feeble sex, won't she, dear?"

"He's certainly never had them tested as they'll be when he meets her," laughed Robert, who I could see was fairly excited about her.

"When he hears her talk, Robert! Isn't she wonderful when she lets herself go? She looks at life from such a pinnacle, she made me feel the size of a peanut!"

"She uplifted *me*; carried me with her to the pinnacle! Edith, she's a great woman."

"So great," I agreed, "that while I know I'm going to adore her, it will be from a respectful distance. She's too awe inspiring to be intimate with."

"Oh, I don't know about that," he protested, walking about the room feverishly as he undressed (I was already in bed); "I hope you will be intimate with her, dearest."

"Yes, dear, in my serious moods. When I feel light-minded, I shall have to avoid her. To be sportive in her presence would be irreverent. She'd think I didn't 'live by a high ideal.' And not

to live by a high ideal is, in her opinion, to be 'outside with dogs and sorcerers.'"

"Dearie, you talk as though she were a prig, instead of the most magnificent woman I ever saw!"

I reflected that in this case there was no odious comparison, since there was nothing "magnificent" about me, so I decided not to mind.

"Of course, Robert," I said, "anything so petty as priggishness is unthinkable in connection with her. The one overpowering impression she makes upon me is of her sublimity. I feel obliged to conceal from her that I am not sublime."

"But, Edith, she is not a bit austere. Why, she's actually motherly, she's so humanly tender and sweet. Did you ever hear a richer speaking voice?"

"Never. It thrilled me every time she spoke. Her playing, her voice, her manner, her big ideas—everything is in keeping."

"Exactly. If she weren't very young we never would have got her here."

Margaret, I'm going to admit to you that there was just one little episode of our delightful evening with Miss Worthington (Dorothea Worthington is her distinguished sounding name—it, too, expresses her) that rankles a bit, as it would not do if I, also, were "sublime." It was a remark Robert made to her. Tell me whether I was foolish to mind it.

It was just as she was taking leave of me, looking tall and beautiful in her long cloak and furs; Robert was standing by in his overcoat, hat in hand; she was holding my hand and looking down into my face; her every least act seems spontaneously characteristic of her and you can't imagine what a charm there is in that.

"We shall want you to regard our home as your own, Miss Worthington," I remarked.

"Yes," added Robert, "we need you, Miss Worthington. We are 'old married folks' now and are getting awfully prosaic, I'm afraid. We need stirring up, we need a change. We need it badly. At least *I* do. Come to us often."

"When we realize we need stirring up, there is hope for us," she smiled. "It's

when we are satisfied with the groove (into which it is *so* easy to jog-trot, isn't it?) that we are in danger. But I am afraid I'm giving you too big a dose of my philosophizing tonight. You are both so responsive that I can't resist it. Mrs. Newbold," she added gently, "this has been a full evening to me."

I, too, at the end of that evening, would have felt "uplifted," as Robert says he was, had it not been for that little thing that rankled. It isn't so infinitesimal, is it, that you can't see what it is? Perhaps it's my state of health that makes me so sensitive. Am I morbid?

Your ever loving
EDITH.

VI

YOUR dear letter came on Wednesday as usual, you unfailing friend, and I'm again lost in amazement at your precocious knowledge of what I should think only an old married woman like me would know. So you think that when a man and wife are in the same profession, it is far safer, for the preservation of the marriage tie, that the wife should grow commonplace rather than that she should *go ahead of her husband in his own line of work*. How do you know such things? It is perfectly true, Margaret. I don't believe any normal man can stand having his wife excel him in *his* line of work, however proud he might be of her accomplishments in other lines. Not that I was in any danger of excelling my husband, though there were a few weeks when I did feel a little sensitive for Robert because my department kept growing so out of all proportion to the growth of the rest of the school.

Yes, I still work at the Conservatory afternoons. Of course, since Miss Worthington is here, I shall be able to stop teaching whenever I feel I can't go on.

Two days this week I had to stay at home, not on account of my health, but Mrs. Newbold's. She was so ill that one whole day I never left her room; heart trouble, you know, and of course dangerous. Eliot sat up with her at night. I wanted to divide the night

with him, but he very arbitrarily forbade it.

Yesterday she was so much better that Robert thought I might safely go to the Conservatory. Miss Worthington, he said, was rather overworked without me.

"You're looking so pale, dear, you ought to get outdoors anyway."

"The doctor doesn't want your mother to be left alone yet, Robert."

"Let Abigail stay with her."

"My dear," I explained, "Abigail would have to leave the sick room to answer the doorbell and the telephone and to see after the furnace, not to mention the dinner—"

But details like that never fail to bring to Robert's eyes a far-away look that warns me I'm talking to myself, not to him.

He submitted, however, to my staying at home.

It does seem as though I were failing him at all points, for that very evening I had to refuse him again when he wanted me so very much to go with him to call on Miss Worthington at her apartments. I had gone upstairs after dinner and had just finished making Mrs. Newbold comfortable for the night, when Robert softly called me from her room into the unlighted library, to put his request.

"But your mother can't yet be left alone in the house at night, dear," I objected, as, standing together in the bay window of the dark library, his arm about me, we tried to thresh the thing out. "Eliot says," I went on, "that he has an absolutely unavoidable business engagement this evening. And Abigail is going to a church rally (whatever, in Heaven's name, that form of religious gaiety is!)."

"But mother is in bed asleep and won't wake up until tomorrow morning. She's perfectly safe."

"If you'll call up Dr. West and get his consent to her being left entirely alone, of course I'll go with you, dear."

"That's not necessary," he answered irritably, for he was annoyed at my persistence. "Come, come; you *need* to get out; you need rousing; you need just

what contact with Miss Worthington can give you—a bigger view of life, a higher plane of thought; you let the petty details of daily life absorb you too much, dearest. It's spoiling you."

Margaret, I was horribly hurt. I couldn't answer him for the beating in my throat.

"So do get on your coat and hat and come, Edith."

"If anything happened to your mother while I was gone, I would never get over it. Anyway, she might wake and want a glass of water or something. It isn't to be thought of, our leaving her here alone."

"How do you suppose we managed these circumstances when you were not here?" he asked in a tone which betrayed that he thought I took a great deal on myself.

"I suppose Eliot managed them, with your help," I hastily added.

"I've been counting all day on this little visit this evening," he said, looking so keenly disappointed that, hurt as I was, I felt almost sorry for him. "Miss Worthington expects us. I told her we'd be 'round."

"Then you go, Robert, without me."

"And leave you to mope at home alone, feeling yourself ill used!"

"I'd feel myself much more ill used if you stayed with me, dear, in your present frame of mind."

"Oh, all right, then! If you'd rather be alone than have me 'round, I will go!"

With which he turned away and walked out of the room.

I stood there, feeling in a numb, sick way how incredible it was that this thing had passed between us, when a slight movement behind me in the room made me start and turn to see Eliot rise up from a dark corner at the other side of the library and come forward. He had been there all the time and had overheard!

He came up to me, took my hand in his, pressed it for an instant—and without a word, turned and left the room.

Margaret! I felt as if that silent hand-clasp, with all that it said to me of his appreciation of my care of his mother, had saved my soul! Instead of sitting

in my room all evening, brooding over what I so bitterly felt to be Robert's disappointment in me, I was soothed and comforted by this first real expression of friendliness Eliot has ever vouchsafed me.

Now what I have written must not mislead you into thinking badly of Robert. I pity a man when his wife is pregnant, for he certainly has a lot to bear. How can he realize the fearful draining of her body, mind and soul to succor the new being that is growing under her heart? He only knows she has ceased to interest or charm him.

When Robert came in, at about eleven o'clock, he was in a very exalted frame of mind. I was in bed, but not asleep, so he talked to me with great animation as he undressed, expressing many noble sentiments about Art and Life (with a reverence which requires that they be written with capitals), also about the Infinite, the Absolute, the Universal Consciousness, his True Self, until my poor, puny intellect seemed to be dancing a jig in my skull. I recognized Miss Worthington's phraseology. But when *she* uses such language it really seems to mean something. On Robert's lips it was so *funny*. Margaret, that I had to draw the covers over my head to conceal my hysterical laughter, not of amusement at all, for I was in torment lest the poor boy see me. But—well, I think a sort of madness possessed me, I had lost my grip on myself.

No more this time.

Good night.

EDITH.

VII

DEAR MARGARET:

You ask me how Miss Worthington "wears." Let me tell you of an episode which may enable you to judge for yourself.

I called on her yesterday afternoon after Conservatory hours to discover her giving a piano lesson, at her apartment, to a young lady of well-known family in Williamsburg. Now every teacher in Robert's employ signs a contract to do no remunerative work

outside the Conservatory; so, naturally, I was very much astonished.

Miss Worthington, however, was not at all disturbed. She asked me to excuse her until she should be free, provided me with a volume of Essays by Elbert Hubbard, and then serenely proceeded to finish the lesson.

I didn't read the essays, but spent the time trying to find an explanation for her apparent breach, though I was distracted in my speculations by the charm of her voice, as she taught, and by the admiration she compelled from me of her gift in teaching.

The pupil was finally dismissed and Miss Worthington sat down to visit with me. Now, I thought, I should hear her explanation of the compromising circumstance upon which I had happened.

I closed the Hubbard volume and laid it on the table beside which we sat.

"What do you think of Hubbard?" she asked, as she smiled upon me with a friendliness that seemed to embrace me and which warmed my heart to her.

"I am such a back number as to still prefer the Star of Bethlehem to the Star of East Aurora," I answered, as I thought, very cleverly. One feels obliged to be as clever as one can be with Miss Worthington.

"Hubbard is a superficial *poseur*," she granted. "No man can be truly great who is an egotist."

I tucked this epigram (wasn't it an epigram?) back in my memory to repeat to Robert, and perhaps to Eliot, at dinner; and Miss Worthington proceeded:

"Too much of our education makes for a shallow egotism. A pupil works for class rank, not for culture; studies to pass examinations, not to gain knowledge. Especially is that true of girls. Don't you find that with the class of girls we have at the Conservatory the whole aim of their parents is to fit them to shine socially? The result is that their lives never strike rock bottom and are therefore never satisfying or truly happy. To merely skim the top of life is never to know the deep contentment that work and service bring.

To say nothing of the want of dignity, the vulgarity, of an aimless, useless life."

She spoke so earnestly and looked so sad over it. "But don't take it so to heart," I ventured to say soothingly.

"Well," she admitted, "I suppose, in spite of their frivolous parents, the girls who have anything worth while in them will work out their own problem. The others don't really matter."

"In these days," I said conversationally, "when fortunes are so easily made and lost in a day, it is really an economic safeguard to equip a girl for a career, so that she may be able to take care of herself in case she's stranded."

"I was thinking of it not so much from the economic as from the spiritual plane," she gently corrected me, and I at once felt small and commonplace.

"By the way," I said, to get back to the subject of her pupil, "Elsie Natchez seems to be rather talented, musically, doesn't she?"

"Unusually."

"What an odd looking girl she is!" I persisted, determined to force her to an explanation if possible.

"No wonder. Her mother is a Russian, her father a Scotch Presbyterian."

"Dear me! That would make a Turk, wouldn't it? It sounds as though it might."

"It makes a curiously interesting personality," she smiled.

"I had not known she was musical at all; she has never come near the Conservatory. To be sure," I hastily continued, embarrassed at the "situation" I was evoking, "I'm glad she isn't a pupil of *mine*, she's so tall I'd have a stiff neck looking up at her. Eliot calls her 'Nearer-My-God-to-Thee'!"

She laughed, and added composedly: "I am very much interested in her, for she really *works*. And she is so receptive of a suggested new outlook."

I said nothing to this and there was a slight pause. Evidently she was not going to account for herself. Perhaps there was no explanation and she was simply breaking her contract.

I turned our talk into another channel.

On my way home from this call upon Miss Worthington, I met her pupil,

Elsie Natchez. I thought Miss Natchez looked very much embarrassed as she bowed to me.

A moment after she had passed me, to my surprise she turned back and overtook me.

"May I walk with you, Mrs. Newbold?" she asked. "I want to speak with you about—about what must have looked very queer to you this afternoon, finding me taking lessons from Miss Worthington."

"Miss Worthington will explain it of course to Mr. Newbold," I answered.

"Then she did not explain to you? I knew she wouldn't!"

I said nothing.

"That's because she assumes everyone to be as large-minded in the judgments of others as she is herself. She would not *stoop* to explain her questionable position."

"I am sure there is a satisfactory explanation," I assured the girl.

"But you will never hear it from her, Mrs. Newbold. So you must hear it from me. One day, two weeks ago, Miss Worthington happened to hear me play in an apartment adjoining hers; she inquired about me, came to see me and offered to teach me. I told her I could not afford to study, and she begged me to let her teach me without any remuneration. I allowed myself to be persuaded, and I have no words to tell you what it is to me. I have longed so to go on with my music, it has been such a real tragedy to me to have had to give it up in our financial break-up! And now to have *such* teaching—and such constant stimulus and inspiration to the highest ideals in my work—" She choked up and could not go on.

"You give as much as you get," I gently insisted. "She so loves her work with you and you are so responsive to her ideas."

Now, Margaret, of course the significant thing in this tale is not the free music lessons, but the fact of Miss Worthington's willingness to appear dishonorable rather than be so by disclosing Miss Natchez's delicate relation to her. Also, her taking it for granted that her integrity could not be doubted

under any appearances. To me, there was something rather heroic in her silence. Robert quite glowed over it when I recounted it to him. I am sure this fine and noble woman does give him the "stirring up" and the "change" which he told her he "needed badly."

With love,

EDITH.

VIII

Six weeks since you have had anything but picture post cards from me! It seems like six years to *me*, dear, so much has been crowded into the time.

For one thing, Robert and Dorothea (as we now call Miss Worthington) have "found each other." Now, don't mock! I assure you it's a most serious business. Robert has explained it all to me. It seems that the "Universe" has united his soul to the soul of Dorothea even as it united him and me; that love is not exclusive, but inclusive, which means (if you don't know) that his loving me need not bar him from loving every other soul whom his soul "meets and finds"; that we must refuse no experience which the Universe vouchsafes us, even though to the limited vision of commonplace and conventional minds the new experiences may seem like disloyalty to former sacred experiences.

"Gain today is toppling loss tomorrow," says Browning.

You see how such a broad theory of life does away with the petty passions of jealousy, selfishness, narrowness in one's sympathies. So, at least, say Robert and Dorothea.

But since this thing began, Robert and I have gone through fire, water and bloody seas in wrestling with it—or at least I have—dragging him after me through the blackness as far as the radiance of Dorothea in his soul could let him be dragged. She to his rescue whenever I would get him too far into the depths to which I've ignominiously sunk.

"But where," I one day asked him in my bewilderment and, I confess Margaret, my pain, "do you draw the line?"

"That's just it! We draw no lines. We put up no barriers! We open our souls to the whole universe, to the Infinite—and let it give us what it will!"

"Does it sound to you like free love?" I prosaically suggested.

"Don't drag it down to that low plane, dear—our beautiful relation!" (referring, of course, to his and Dorothea's) "When I speak of barriers, I mean spiritual ones."

"To be logical, it would seem to me you would have to advocate physical as well as spiritual freedom."

"So we would, but that the sanctity of the family must not be violated, the ideal of the family being the foundation of civilization."

The theory originated, not with Robert, but with Dorothea. So I asked her once when I was alone with her at the Conservatory: "Did you ever prove this doctrine of yours on anyone but Robert? I mean were you ever so intimate with any other married man?"

She looked pained. "To speak of our beautiful relation as my being 'intimate with a married man' is to put it on so low a plane, Edith!"

"Well, then, did you ever have this 'beautiful relation' with any other—eh, soul who had already found his life's mate?" I asked poetically, willing to oblige.

"No; it is through Robert"—she speaks his name reverently—"through the Truth that he and I have found together, that I have come to realize the universality of love. I had always blindly assumed with the unthinking masses that marriage excluded love with other kindred spirits. Now I know that it includes *all* love! Each new, vital and true relation with another soul which a husband and wife may form, only enriches *their* relation. It does not, as the conventional belief goes, mar and weaken it."

"Doesn't it," I said musingly, "when it takes from the wife her husband's companionship, the enthusiasm of his devotion, the glamour and romance of their relation—these being transferred—"

"Glamour and romance!" she re-

peated disapprovingly. "Cheap, transitory things that you'd better be rid of!"

"They are cheap and transitory," I admitted. "I know that now. I had supposed them eternal."

"Love that is founded in the Absolute *is* eternal, Edith. But 'glamour and romance'—" She dismissed them with a queenly disdain that never for an instant suspected herself to be the very embodiment of these elements she scorned. She is very young.

"If your beautiful relation is altogether spiritual," I wondered; "if there is nothing sexual in it, why can't you and I have such a relation?"

"But we can!" she responded glowing. "I hope we shall! Only keep your soul open to the Infinite, Edith, and sacred experiences like Robert's and mine *must* come to you."

I suppose you are wondering, Margaret, why I don't scratch her. Dear, you would have to know her to understand. She is so sincere in it all. She is so maidenly unconscious of such a big side of this "universal love" which she thinks she's discovered. She's so magnetic, so gifted, so womanly and lovable; so noble and so *good*, in short—that, to tell the truth, I'd have a poor opinion of Robert if he *didn't* fairly worship her, though his doing so has seemed to maim my very soul!

If I were not so listless these days, no doubt I should be madly jealous. But, Margaret, I think my heart is dead within me. I wonder sometimes whether I shall ever again feel my old zest in life.

I am sure Dorothea is the first woman that Eliot ever treated with a profound respect, except his mother. The first time he met her, which was the second time she dined here, I noted his immediate admiration and interest and the instinctive deference of his manner toward her.

But she is so absorbed in Robert that she doesn't notice Eliot much, or any of us for that matter, though she is always sweet to everyone, and Mrs. Newbold thinks her perfect. Indeed, one of Dorothea's dominating characteristics is an absolute self-absorption—a self-ab-

sorption which makes her overlook a good many things that an all-round observant person would see very big. It has, however, the appearance of a virtue that rises above petty details. And yet, when the details involve the wounding or suffering of another, then doesn't such ignoring of them become selfishness?

Last night Dorothea dined with us again. She comes to us several times a week; Robert's mother loves her visits.

Always after dinner I help Mrs. Newbold to get comfortably to bed before joining Robert over in the library or down in the parlor. But every time Dorothea has been here, I've found myself, on joining her and Robert, so obviously unnecessary, even superfluous, that once or twice I've crept away and left them to themselves for a few hours, only appearing when Dorothea was about to leave. I could see how grateful they both were to me for giving them this chance to commune with the Infinite. You see, if I try to commune *along*, I'm apt to sound a false note. Last night they were trying over some verses by R. W. Gilder, that Robert has set to music. Dorothea did not at all approve of the sentiment of the poem, which goes:

I am a woman, therefore
I may not call to him, fly to him—

"A primitive, even a barbarous idea of love!" she said. "The Oriental idea that the woman must go draped, must be sought, even hunted as prey! Why should the soul's freedom be limited by sex? Why should she *not* 'call to him, fly to him, cry to him'? Why must she 'crush and defy' her heart? I believe, rather, with the poet Sill,

Faith, or a doubt,
I will speak out,
And hide not my heart!

That is the truer, higher attitude toward every experience of life that may come either to man or woman."

"For *you*, Dorothea, yes," I spoke in. "A girl less good-looking, less fascinating, wouldn't dare. 'The fruit that falls without picking is rather too mellow for me,' is the sentiment of most men."

Robert and Dorothea exchanged a

glance, pitying and amused, at my commonplace and materialistic "plane of thought."

"One might as well recognize facts," I suggested tamely. "Beauty and charm can take liberties with conventions (if a woman's waiting to be sought is a convention, not an instinct), liberties which, if a girl lack charm, would simply make her ridiculous."

"Try to see it, Edith, from a spiritual plane," Dorothea earnestly besought me; "from the plane of the Absolute."

"But as we are not yet disembodied spirits, the material media through which our souls communicate are not wholly unimportant to us, do you think they are?"

"We make them altogether too important; we forget that they are *only* media," she answered.

I did not pursue it further, it wearied me so. Whenever I do join in their talk, I always speedily collapse and am extinguished, so much so that Robert presently begs for "signs of life," which I take as a hint that I'd perhaps better leave them alone to search for truth, hand-in-hand and heart-to-heart, as they cannot do when I am by.

I feel so strangely outside of it all, Margaret, like a looker-on at a—well, a tragedy or a comedy, as you will.

I did ask Robert the other day in a vague way whether he did not think he was perhaps going too far with Dorothea. But, you see, he is like a convert to a new faith: he thinks everyone outside that faith benighted, and himself so illumined that he can only smile tolerantly at the folly of those "lower down in the scale."

"Going too far?" he repeated. "If only you had a higher ideal of love, Edith, you and I might meet much more vitally than we do. How could one be 'going too far' in one's growth in the Divine Life?"

"One couldn't," I admitted. "But one could go too far in one's intimacy with a maiden when one has a wife—so, at least, it seems to my entirely finite mind; too far, I mean, for one's own good and for the maiden's. I'm not speaking for the wife. She, of course,

poor worm, must not be taken into account."

"As I've demonstrated to you before, dear, my having a wife must not, *must not*," he repeated with gentle firmness, "interfere in any least degree with my freedom to open my soul to the universe in whatever form it may reveal itself to me."

"Let the form be even a comely maiden. I see. But the world does not see, and you and Dorothea are being criticized. I merely mention the fact in case you are not aware of it, so that you may guard against further criticism."

"But we don't wish to guard against criticism to the extent of forswearing the Truth that together we have delved out. Our Friendship is too fundamental, too divine, to be weakened in the least because of the carping of Philistines who are stone deaf to the summons of the Higher Life."

Taking this to mean that he considered me one of the Philistines, I dropped the subject.

There are not many things, these days, Margaret, in which I am interested, but I shall be curious to hear how you view a "Friendship" like this.

Ever yours,

EDITH.

IX

You say, dear Margaret, that my letters leave so much unexplained. Now, I have really written you a continuous chronicle of my life ever since I came here from my wedding trip, but nearly every other letter I write I lack courage to send, so of course some links are missing. Margaret, if in my coming trial of the flesh I should go under (and I have absolutely no desire to live), the letters I have *not* sent you will be found in my desk, tied up and addressed to you; and so, when it can no longer matter to me, you will be able to read my story complete. You and I have been so close that I wish you to understand. That is, when I'm dead. If I live—well, then, probably those letters, and some others with the writing of which I

shall ease my heart, will after a while be burned up. It is just possible *this* letter will never be sent you.

The "Friendship" grows apace, as does also the gossip in the town concerning it, I regret to say. But Robert and Dorothea are on a plane so far above that, that, in spite of warnings from several sources, they are not judicious. They are seen together on the street so often, and pupils, coming to the Conservatory and going to Dorothea's music room, or to Robert's, as the case may be, are so apt (I hear) to find these two alone together, looking "uplifted"—as they always do when, in communing with each other, they've been "reaching out after the Absolute"!

Sometimes I wonder, however, whether even Dorothea does live up to her own high standards. For instance, one evening recently when she dined with us, she actually noticed Eliot enough to ask him to advise her (from his knowledge of finances as a banker) about an investment of hers, for, it seems, she has considerable means of her own. She had brought some documents with her which, after dinner, she submitted to him.

Having looked over her papers, he returned them to her with the pronouncement, "An excellent investment. You are fortunate to have such an opportunity. You will nearly double your capital inside of a year."

"But what I meant to ask, Mr. Newbold, is whether this concern, with its very large profits, is entirely 'straight.' Is it ethically justifiable?"

"Ha!" Eliot guffawed. "'Ethically justifiable?'" he repeated quizzically. "Well, is the gaining of money for which we have rendered no service ever 'ethically justifiable?'"

"I don't think it is, Mr. Newbold."

"Then you are answered."

"Apart from that general principle, is this concern still dishonest, unethical, what you will?"

"The higher the rate of profit on your investment, the greater the robbery of some other poor devils the exploiting of whom yield you your profit. Wealth can't be created out of nothing. If you

did not work for it someone else did. So I hold that from any ethical standpoint (if you insist upon talking about ethics) the taking of interest is robbery."

"Unequivocally?"

"Unequivocally—from the standpoint of ethics, you understand."

She heaved a little sigh as she slowly, thoughtfully folded her papers and tucked them away in her gown somewhere; and nothing more was said about the matter.

Her silence signified to all of us, I think, that however much she might regret the low standards of the financial world, she did not mean to miss her chance to double her capital.

(A week later.)

Recently I made a discovery—a discovery, Margaret, which has—reasonably or unreasonably, I don't know—blackened the sun in the heavens for me.

Robert, by the way, is frequently seized at any hour of the night with an inspiration to talk to his goddess, so he gets out of bed and writes to her. In fact, they exchange letters almost daily. That is one of the things the students have noticed, their passing notes to each other. Now, before Dorothea came into our lives, Robert never so much as wrote a note to anyone without reading it to me. But about this very flourishing correspondence with her, he has always been extremely secretive; so much so that one day when he came into our room and saw that he had left one of her letters lying loose there, he actually turned white.

"But why," I instantly spoke to him, "should you look so alarmed? Why should there be anything in this world, Robert, that you wish to conceal from me?"

"Dearest, you are such a little Philistine!" he smiled, coming up to me and putting his arm about me. "Can't you try to see that this Friendship of mine is infinitely above the pettiness of the conventional idea of love, in which, when a man is married, his relations with all other women must end, lest his wife grow jealous? Edith, dear, I can't tell you how grotesque my old attitude toward these things seems to me now."

"If your relation with Dorothea is so justifiable—"

"Justifiable!" he repeated with a groan. "Was the relation of the Apostles to Jesus justifiable?"

"I was going to say, if your relation with her is so—'divine,' why is it necessary so carefully to exclude me from it as to make you look frightened when you thought I might have seen one of her letters to you?"

"Frightened, dear?" he smiled, though he looked annoyed. "You misunderstood. I will say, however, Edith, that my relation with Dorothea is a sacred one, upon which not even you can trespass, even as *she* cannot trespass upon my relation with you."

"Your relation with me? Such a negligible quantity as that has become, Robert, is not to be mentioned as over against your 'vital' relation with her."

"Don't be jealous, dearie," he said, drawing me close, kissing me and—but I was relieved when the ringing of the telephone made him let me go.

Well, when a few days ago, I happened accidentally to find under my eyes a letter of Dorothea's, lying open on our bureau (unexampled heedlessness on Robert's part), the few words which I saw before I knew at what I was looking (for I'm not even familiar with her handwriting) gave me a shock, Margaret, from which I have not recovered. I don't know why it should have been so. Over and over again I tell myself that those words revealed to me nothing I had not really known. But, somehow, they brought the thing home to me, as nothing had yet done.

This is what I read:

"My own Beloved! You and I so vitally near to each other that we are really alone in this wonderful universe—"

That was all I saw when I caught myself up. My face in the glass was deathly white, my eyes startled, horrified. "My own Beloved!" How did she *dare*? They two "alone together"—I excluded!

Robert must have missed the letter and remembered that he had left it lying out; for an hour after he had gone

to the Conservatory, he came home. I was still sitting on the side of the bed, staring at the floor, as I'd been doing ever since my shocked gaze had caught those extraordinary words.

"Robert," I said to him with lips that would hardly obey my will, "I accidentally saw the first three lines of that letter—no more—the first three lines," I repeated mechanically. "She calls you 'Beloved'! You—"

What else I said I don't know, for it seems I fell to the floor in unconsciousness.

Later, I found myself in bed, the doctor sitting with me. The rest of that day and all the next I suffered hideously.

Robert was horribly upset. He never left me for a moment while I was in pain and jeopardy. I felt sorry for his distress, for it didn't, somehow, seem worth while that he should make himself so wretched over me when another woman filled his life.

I told him so the next evening when, white and weak but safe, and free from agony, I lay in my bed and tried to meet and face our mournful situation.

"But, dearest," he earnestly protested, "my love for you is only purified, made more beautiful, through my uplifting relation with her. There is no detail of my life which is not made divine through her."

I repressed my impulse to ask him at this point whether he had squared with Eliot. He might not have seen the relevancy of the question.

"Did it need her, Robert, to purify and ennoble our love?"

"Dear, every great experience that comes to you or me must enrich our relation to each other."

"Granted that we may have many, or at least several, inspiring and 'divine' relations in life, one among them must be supreme over the others. Now the 'soul' who is supreme in your life is the one to whom you are really wedded. So, if you and Dorothea feel it necessary to be so 'true to yourselves' that you cannot, for a mere conventionality, turn your backs upon each other, but must welcome each other into your inmost

holy of holies—I would humbly inquire, where do *I* come in?"

"Where you always came in, darling," he tenderly assured me, "in a very real and vital place in my life."

"But not the supreme place? Then which one of us is more truly your spiritual wife, I or Dorothea?"

"It is not a difference of degree, dear, but of kind."

I felt too weak, physically, to hold out in such subtleties of argument as this, so I gave it up and, literally and spiritually, turned my face to the wall.

Let me assure you for your relief that I am entirely recovered from the illness of last week and am now going about my work as usual, both at home and at the Conservatory.

I do a lot of wondering these days as to how Eliot regards this Friendship between Robert and Dorothea. He is a terribly keen observer. Yet even he, I am sure, does not realize the lengths to which it has gone. I have been quite unable to read any signs in his face as to what he thinks of it. He still treats Dorothea with deference. He respects anyone whom he believes in, and no one could be so stupid as not to believe in her. Perhaps he, too, holds to this theory of free spiritual love. But even if he does, I know now that Eliot would always be too unselfish (gruff as he is outwardly) to take any happiness for himself at the expense of another's suffering.

His habitual manner to me, of late, has been grave and kind—even gentle. His keen eyes are on me often, as though he were trying to penetrate my attitude toward the Friendship. But before him and his mother my bearing is a mask.

The other day he happened to join me coming home from the Conservatory, and he took the occasion to tell me a curious thing.

"Do you remember, Edith, my talk with Miss Worthington one evening about an investment of hers, and her inquiry as to whether the concern was 'ethically justifiable'?" and again he guffawed at the bare recollection.

"I remember."

"Well, the lady *is* heroic! I think I never really appreciated her until, in a report that came to our bank today, I found that she had taken all of her stock out of that company, thereby losing a little fortune."

"Then *she* didn't tell you she had withdrawn?" I asked.

"Not a word from her. She doesn't know that I know."

"That's the wonder of her," I said. "I'm afraid if I ever did anything so commendable as that I'd insist upon having credit for it! That's how small-minded I am, Eliot!"

"Are you 'small-minded,' Edith? I hadn't noticed it. You see there is more than one kind of heroism and—anyway," he broke off abruptly, "Miss Worthington is so wealthy that she can afford to be rather honest. Some poor devils really can't afford to be honest, you know. For myself, if I were starving, I'd steal food."

I thought that a chance to inquire whether we were "back very much with our board."

"Robert paid up in full the first of the month," Eliot cheerfully assured me.

Which information did not give me the comfort it might have done if I had not once heard Eliot affirm that however abhorrent a lie may be it is sometimes the lesser of two evils. Such being his theory, I conclude that he considers his lie the lesser evil, when it is a choice between that and a woman's worrying over debts, who is so near the Valley of the Shadow.

Good night, Margaret, dearest friend.
EDITH.

X

DEAR MARGARET:

At last, after my long, long silence, I am up and about once more and able to write to you. It is "borne in upon me" how differently I would be writing if my darling baby had lived—the mother yearning in me was at such a height of expectancy, my arms ached so to hold that lovely little head on my breast! If you had ever seen me, Margaret, handling those little baby clothes

—I can't write of it. I can only tell you that this disappointment is the blackest experience my life has ever known. Oh, Margaret, Robert and I *needed* the baby! We needed him to save our love, to save our life together. I will admit to you, now, that our child was my last and only hope.

Your faithful letters all the time I was ill were a comfort. They, as nothing else could do, took me out of myself for the time being—made me unconscious, for the moment at least, of the black gloom of my heart.

I suppose you wondered at hearing the news of our loss and my illness from Eliot instead of Robert. I would have asked Robert to write, but he is so procrastinating about such things, and I knew Eliot would attend to it at once, so I asked *him* to let you know.

No wonder his letter impressed you! What subtle intuition led you to let me see it? It *helped* me, when I was in dire need of help! How strong, how kind it showed him! How little did I dream, in my first acquaintance with him, that he was capable of such fineness, such unselfishness, such exquisite sympathy! When I read it—for the first time, I could have cried, Margaret.

I'm not yet in a normal physical condition, though I've resumed the house-keeping and my work at the Conservatory. Dorothea had been overdoing in my long absence, so as soon as I was well enough to take her place, she went to her home in Boston for a three weeks' vacation. She's there now.

Robert had suffered so keenly from the strain of my illness, the shock of our loss, and (I must add) my upset nerves that he, too, felt the need of a vacation. It is dreadfully injudicious for them both to be away at the same time; naturally, it occasions more gossip.

When I am stronger, no doubt I shall be less nervous, and less sensitive. The least thing, now, brings tears, and men do hate a weepy woman, don't they? For three days before Robert left, while he was making his preparations, I must confess that I was crying just about all the time. I did not want him to go—I wanted him by me—I did not feel able

to bear my grief and disappointment alone—I needed him. When he came to kiss me good-bye, I behaved like a hysterical child, threw myself upon my bed, sobbing! So he stalked out with a stony heart.

Afterwards I felt so ashamed that I had been so uncontrolled. I wrote him that I was sorry he had had the misery of leaving home with rain both indoors and out, for he left in a driving storm.

He had bought a week's ticket to Boston and had assured me that he would be back inside of a week, so I spent the time moping and marking off the seven days on the calendar as they went, heartsick at the slowness of their passing, and longing almost wildly for the Saturday night of his return. Three times during that interminable week I wrote to him. But he must have been too busy to write, or thought it not worth while when he would be back so soon.

Saturday night came at last, and with it a telegram announcing that he would extend his absence another week. It is now nearing the end of the second week. No letter has come, and I have not written again. Perhaps he will stay all the time Dorothea is away, which will be all next week. His work at the Conservatory is needing him.

Last night, for the first time in many months, I touched the piano here in the house. Of course, as always, it presently brought Eliot down from his room.

The silent sympathy of his presence, sitting there near me in the dark, was too much for me in my present state of mind and body. I suddenly broke down and sobbed.

He was at my side in an instant.

"Don't—don't, you poor child!" he plead with me, and the helpless pain of his voice made me try hard to get control of myself, for why should he be made a victim, in any least degree, of this situation of mine and Robert's? So I choked back my sobs and lifted my head.

"My dear," he said, with a kindness in his grave voice that nearly started me up again, "let me give you a bit of philosophy to tone you up—will you?"

"Oh! Philosophy!" I groaned. "It

seems to me to be the root of all evil!"

"Many crimes are committed in its name, I'll admit. If the word 'philosophy' nauseates you—and I don't wonder if it does—let me then give you a fact or two. Little girl, you think you are playing a losing game. But it is they, those two, who are on a wide sea in a leaky craft! You'll see! They're bound to come to grief, as everyone must who dares to steer his course as though no other vessels ploughed the main! Individualism is not the law of life, even of self-preservation. Self-absorbed people, who consider only their own best interests at the expense of another's, make fools of themselves inevitably, simply because life can't be lived in absolute selfishness."

"But," I said, wondering, "they think they live by an ideal so much higher than that of most people!"

"But, you know, the highest ground is sometimes a bluff, if you'll let me make a wretched pun. That's their danger. So far 'above the common plane' they aspire, that they can't hear the voices of those 'below.' Isolation is neither wholesome nor safe. We never really learn common sense until we learn self-forgetfulness. Egotists are fools."

"You call Dorothea, that glorious woman, selfish, an egotist, a fool?"

"She is a glorious woman. Robert himself doesn't admire her more than I do. But she's so insanely self-absorbed that she does not see what is right under her very nose. She searches the heavens with a telescope to find God and blindly walks over another woman's heart in order to do it! But God is not found in that way. Does the conscious search after Him ever reveal Him, I wonder? You, little girl, with your spontaneous giving of yourself, your self-obliteration, self-unconsciousness, if I may coin a word which is the very keynote to your charm—you are nearer 'truth' and God than our lovely Dorothea will ever be until she gets down from her stilts and stops 'aspiring above the common plane.' Here's the difference between you two girls—"

He paused to lay it off on his fingers,

and I waited breathlessly. I had always longed to know what he thought of Dorothea.

"She, with her extraordinarily clear and vigorous brain, her really lofty character, true as heaven, womanly and lovable, is introspective to the point of being entirely without interest in anyone else except as that someone else may be a receptacle for her burning outpourings of herself. You, on the other hand, are wide-eyed with interest and sympathy for everyone but yourself. Who that knows you, little woman, isn't moved to make a confidante of you? But who would venture to try it on Dorothea? She'd be bored horribly and show it. Yet her one consuming passion is to pour out herself to an appreciative and responsive listener."

"You can't mean she isn't deeply 'interested' in Robert?"

"She is not in the least interested in Robert. She doesn't know Robert, has never taken the trouble to know him. Whom does she take the trouble to know except herself? To be sure, she knows herself least of all, for that matter. But has she ever shown the least interest in knowing you, or me, or mother, or the teachers at the Conservatory, or anyone in Williamsburg? As to Robert, he is merely her safety valve. He 'meets and responds' to her, she thinks, poor female! She's made him drunk with the charm of her personality, and he, young fool, thinks he's in love with her philosophy! Her 'philosophy' would be unbearable priggishness in anyone but *her*. What makes it go down is that the dear girl believes in herself so absolutely that she convinces others. Sincerity like hers would win converts to a belief in anything! And for that matter, she really has got hold of something worth while, or rather, of what will be worth while when she's sifted it down to where it's usable, which it certainly is not in its present form. It's not human! So, child, don't you think for one moment that *your* life is wrecked. It's you who are safe in port. Let them look out for bumps ahead! If civilization has developed any one truth, if it's not an utter farce (and God knows it's farce enough)

the truth it has evolved is that altruism, not individualism, is the law of happiness, of life itself!"

And with that he turned away, with strange abruptness, I thought, and left me. Do you know, sometimes I half imagine that Eliot avoids me.

I fell to pondering his words when he had gone, marveling much at his keenness and insight; for while I could readily understand the shocked minds of conventional people before the carryings on of Robert and Dorothea, I had almost come to believe, as they themselves believe, that they were "soaring above earth's common plane." Eliot's words certainly gave me food for thought; took me, for a time at least, out of the groove of miserable brooding in which my mind had been moving, almost insanely, ever since the loss of my baby. I think I am getting to look upon Eliot as my salvation!

I have given Robert your address. I do hope he will have time to call to see you.

If you care to call on Dorothea, she is at No. — Mt. Vernon Street. You couldn't help being immensely impressed with her.

Your loving
EDITH.

XI

DEAREST MARGARET:

I am sorry Robert did not get round to see you while he was in Boston.

I hardly thought you would care to call on Dorothea, though indeed, dear, you would not feel a bit like denouncing her if you knew her. No one does, not even the prim people here who look so askance on her undisguised intimacy with Robert. His patronage at the Conservatory, by the way, has suffered lamentably from his absence, largely, I fear, because he was away while Dorothea was gone.

On the eve of his return, I had a long, loving letter from him, to make his peace with me, he said, for his three weeks' absence, and to make up for his not once before having written to me.

He was not greeted, as his manner

seemed to expect, with tears and reproaches. He found me hard at work at my post, outwardly passive, indifferent, while inwardly I was trembling and sick and burning.

To turn from my miserable self a moment—here's exciting news for you! Such a reputation you've gained through your book, Margaret, that our Woman's Club of Williamsburg is going to invite you to come here and address them on, I think, "The Onward and Upward Movement of Woman—Long May She Wave!"—something like that. Of course I've had nothing to do with this, scarcely anyone here knows of my intimacy with you. Since you are so famous, I refrain from speaking of you, it would sound so like bragging!

I'm wild with eagerness at the thought of your coming here, and at least I may have the reflected glory of being your hostess. Let me warn you, dear, they rate you so high, that if you do "address" them, they'll certainly expect you to speak in epigrams! Be warned in time!

I'm wondering what you will think, if you do come, of the great change in me. The face that looks at me out of the glass seems all eyes—albeit, eyes without any light in them. I do look like "War, Pestilence and Famine!"

Oh, Margaret, Margaret! All the suffering of those three weeks of Robert's absence fade into insignificance before the thing that happened to me one night a week ago, a thing so trifling to relate, but scorching my heart with red hot flames.

Mrs. Thurston, president of the large musical club of Williamsburg and an old family friend of the Newbolds, gave a charming dinner last Thursday, and Dorothea, Robert and I were among the guests. I am sure Mrs. Thurston's idea was to put a check to the gossip which is rife, by lending the sanction of her ultra respectability to the friendship of Dorothea and Robert. Not that she herself doesn't violently disapprove of it. She even had the temerity to presume upon long and close intimacy and remonstrate with Robert one day, but his transcendental talk about it so

confounded her, I think, that she hasn't recovered yet. And so, like a true friend, what she can't understand or prevent, she tries to cover up or make the best of.

The other guests at that dinner were manifestly astonished, even excited, at finding Dorothea and Robert there—it lent a spice to the "viands," I assure you!

But the cool greetings, the looks askance which met them at first did not long hold out. You see, Dorothea is so uncommon, so 'way above ordinary people, that merely to meet her and hear her speak is to disarm prejudice and excite admiration and even awe. It was interesting to watch the impression her wonderful personality made.

I could see how proud Robert was of her talk at the table, though he must have known that no one there really grasped her big ideas.

They got to discussing imperialism and patriotism over the salad course, and Dorothea's views were listened to amid a hush that was fairly palpitating.

"The old sentiment of patriotism," she told them, "necessary when self-defense was the whole life of a nation; when the absence of all the modern means of communication isolated a country so completely that foreigners were always enemies; that old, all-powerful sentiment being no longer a necessity, is therefore no longer possible. In these days of electricity, airships, wireless telegraphy, rapid and easy means of travel, and all the other discoveries and inventions which make of the kingdoms of this earth one nation, the foreigner is now our next door neighbor; our friend, not our foe. Not merely America, but the Universe is my country! Not this king or that, but the Eternal is my Sovereign! Not Imperialism, but universal brotherhood should be the expression of the new, the deeper and truer patriotism that must replace the old narrow provincial sentiment which thrived behind stone walls and fortresses."

No one spoke for an instant; then Miss Pollock, President of the Minerva Literary Club, quoted impressively:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said,
'This is my own, my native land!'"

Are we, then, Miss Worthington, no longer to teach our boys and girls that to love their America is a noble sentiment?"

"Let us love our America by all means," answered Dorothea, "but let us love the Universal Country first—the country which includes all mankind as our brothers."

"Nations can't be run on such principles!" spoke up our local congressman.

"Then let us do away with nations; their usefulness seems to be spent anyway. Can't you see," she bent forward in her earnestness to plead her case, her countenance glowing, beautiful, her voice thrilling, "how much more divine our life may be under this higher conception of patriotism? No more wars, no more bickerings about tariffs (the world would be our market and every man free to buy in the cheapest market), no more rivalries, jealousies, suspicions or fears! How much more broadly and fully we should live! *This* is the expansion we should strive for, an Imperialism of thought, of ideals!"

If silence gave consent, she had been convincing, for no one ventured to refute her, she spoke too like a prophetess and looked too like a goddess!

After dinner a new relay of guests arrived for the evening musical which followed, the music being furnished by Robert, who sang, and our Conservatory violin teacher, who played delightfully. I accompanied some of Robert's songs, Dorothea some, and finally Mrs. Thurston brought forth a song which she herself played for him.

It happened to be that exquisite thing he used to sing to me in those strangely happy days which now seem so unreal to me. It used to be a very Sacrament to both of us when he would sing that song to me!

I think you know the song I mean—that translation of Emil Ritterhauss', "What is Love?"

He sang it that night as of old, with such passion, such deep meaning in his

beautiful tones, I was thrilled through and through; hope surged up in my numbed heart. This song, *this* song could never mean anything to Robert apart from *me*, else Love were indeed "a trifling jest!"

I thought: "He is telling me in this way that he is mine, that we are not parted, that he does love me!"

I leaned forward, my eyes burning to catch his, when at the line,

"Then God gave *thee* to me,"

he lifted his eyes to meet—not mine, his shining glance moved past me to Dorothea's rapt gaze and there, during his ecstatic singing of that line, it rested. There it rested, Margaret.

I left this open last night. I'll add a word before mailing it on my way to the Conservatory.

As I remember the rest of that evening at Mrs. Thurston's it seemed like a nightmare to me. I had been so subdued during the dinner, and now I suddenly became so hysterically gay that I could see how the other guests wondered at me.

Even Dorothea and Robert noticed my superfluous vivacity and were perplexed.

When we were leaving, Robert said that we would take Dorothea home, as she had come alone.

But when the three of us started out together, it was in the direction of our house that we turned. I was taken home first, Dorothea walking with us to our door, where I was deposited. Then she and Robert wandered off under the starry night while I went upstairs alone to our room. Alone forevermore, Margaret. It's all over. I see that and bow my head to it. Our love, our life together has all been "a trifling jest," so grotesque that at moments I could shriek with laughter at the humor of it all!

I've let it all go now—absolutely. I struggle no longer. When one reaches the point of utter hopelessness, one begins to be resigned, you know.

I only knew what a numbing blow I had received when two mornings after that dinner I was able, with scarcely an

extra heartbeat, to tell Robert that after serious consideration I had come to a decision to which I knew he would not readily agree, but that his choice lay between that and my going away to earn my own living by teaching music in a Western college where a position was open to me whenever I would take it.

"And this momentous decision?" he inquired with a lift of his brows, his face turning pale at my significantly quiet tone and manner.

"That I be allowed to collect the tuition fees of my department myself, paying my assistant first, then taking an equal salary for myself and turning over to you the rest."

"And what is this for, may I ask?"

"I must be independent of you, Robert—I am no longer your wife."

"Nonsense! This is a most unworthy attitude, Edith! You—"

"I will not discuss it, Robert," I quietly answered. "You can let me have your reply by this evening."

"Look here, Edith," he said with white lips, "don't act in such a way that you make our union even more of a dreary failure than it need be!"

"I act in a way to make our union a failure?"

"By vulgarly getting on a high horse about your earnings. If that element has to come in to mar our life together—"

"Our life *together*, Robert?"

"It certainly will not be together if you keep on like this!"

"Like what?"

"Making 'conditions,' driving bargains and the like. You run the risk of making yourself obnoxious."

"You have an easy means of ridding yourself of me if I am obnoxious. Refuse my 'conditions,' and I leave at once."

With that I left the room, afraid to hear what further he might say to me.

So I wait to hear his decision tonight. Perhaps my next letter, Margaret, will be written from Davidson College. It seems probable. But I hope, at least, that I shall still be here when you come to address our Club.

Your loving
EDITH.

XII

You see, dear, I did not go away. I think Robert is beginning to be alarmed at the attitude of cold disapproval of many of our friends and patrons. My leaving at this time would simply ruin him. And he knows it. Does it seem strange to you that even at the sacrifice of my pride, yes, of my self-respect, I remain here because I am unwilling to lift a finger to hurt him? And this not from any principles I hold as to my wifely duty. It's my heart that won't let me, Margaret.

I am so relieved that you have declined the invitation to address the Club here, greatly as I long to see you. I'd be so incapable of addressing an audience myself that if you "took to the platform," I'd feel we hadn't a thing in common.

You ask me how Mrs. Newbold takes all this.

Well, she doesn't, of course, realize the extent of it, shut up as she is in her room. Whatever Robert does is so right in her fond eyes that she would be slow to recognize a relation which, according to her standards, would be so wrong as that existing between him and Dorothea. And she admires Dorothea so much, it's quite impossible for her to associate anything unworthy with her. Why, everyone, even I—yes, even Eliot, I do believe—all of us are moved to show our best before Dorothea and would be ashamed to show anything less than our best. She may be self-deceived; but isn't it often the finest natures that are the easiest prey to self-deception?

Now, I have an extraordinary, a bewildering thing to tell you. Yesterday being Sunday and Robert having gone to his church choir, I had a quiet morning at home and was going to devote it to a letter to you when I had a call, so to speak, at my room, from Eliot. He, by the way, never goes to church, though I have a feeling that inherently he is really very religious.

However, I'm digressing as usual. I was going to say that he came to sit with me for an hour this morning in the bay

window of my room, to have a talk with me—a queer talk, as you'll admit.

"I've decided," he began, coming characteristically straight to his point, "to put a stop, Edith, to this 'divine Friendship,' the spectacle of which has been edifying all of us this winter."

"Put a stop to it, Eliot?" I questioned in astonishment, my breath coming short. "But how is it possible to interfere?"

"You couldn't, but I can and shall. You've been a wonderful little woman all through this fiery test! You've been—"

He cut himself off sharply, flushing red as he did so, to my puzzled wonder.

"They're making fools of themselves," he added, "and breaking your heart. The thing must stop."

"Your separating them," I answered, my dull voice sounding lifeless to my own ears, as I turned my face away from him to the window, "can't restore anything I've lost, you know. If I had not all along been sure of that, sure of the uselessness of fighting against such a thing—don't you suppose I would have fought for my happiness?"

"You are not the sort of woman, Edith, that a man, even a fellow like Rob, could love lightly. You have a way of getting into one's vitals—well"—he again broke off—"it took a Dorothea to woo him from you! No lesser woman could have done it! When she's out of his reach, he'll turn back to you inevitably."

I shook my head. "External adjustments can't alter or mend anything essential, Eliot. I'm grateful to you, but I'm sure," I said hopelessly, "that interference would be both useless and unwise."

"But I propose to attack *internal* adjustments. In short, to prove to Dorothea the hollowness of her theory that *love is not exclusive*; that Robert's loving you, need not exclude *her* from a place in his heart. We'll put it to the test and prove it false!"

"How? How can you ever convince them?"

"I tell you I'll make her forswear the whole blamed doctrine! Spew it out of

her mouth and turn her back on it! When the 'truth' she now holds begins to pinch *her* (its pinching other people didn't count) she'll 'discover' a higher truth. You'll see!"

"But when and how will you perform this miracle?" I asked, sceptical but interested.

"I begin today," he promptly replied. "She's not to suspect my hand; you see, I'll take her unawares. In six weeks' time you will see her denying every 'truth' that she and Robert have 'delted out.'"

"Impossible!" I cried. "Why, you don't take her seriously, Eliot!"

Not to take Dorothea seriously seemed to me to ignore facts.

"Do you suppose for one moment," he demanded, "that I think she's in love with Robert? She's in love with being loved! She adores, not him, but his adoration of her. Oh, she has a lot to discover about herself before she'll have her proper bearings. I'll help her on. You watch me do it! I begin tonight. To make love to her, Edith!"

I stared. "Then you, too, are in love with her?" I asked, dazed. "To be sure, I don't see how you could help being!"

"What I'm going to teach her is that she can't properly love two men at once. You see, I hold that love is exclusive."

"You are going to try to make her love you?"

"It won't be hard. I've had such opportunities to look on and see how it's done. One must only assume the attitude of an adoring disciple of her philosophy, drink it in thirstily, gratefully—" "This, this is what my waiting soul has hungered and thirsted for!" Then to be sure, one must worship the Expounder of the Truth—"It is you, *you* that have lifted me up—to your own great level! Henceforth I may be godlike—and through *you*!" It's an easy stunt, Edith!"

"But, Eliot," I breathed, incredulous that anyone, even he, could think of dealing with Dorothea flippantly, "if, according to her theory, she is free to love you and Robert and every other 'true soul' who 'finds' her, then how

your making love to her can change anything—"

"If I don't accept her theory?"

"You mean she will have to choose between you and her theory?"

"Exactly. And what woman ever gave up a live man for a dead, cold theory?"

"Dorothea would go to the stake for her beliefs, Eliot!"

"That she would. But she wouldn't give up a lover for them."

"A lover? You would not speak so of her if you loved her, or even respected her, I think. And if you don't love her, then you run the risk of hurting her in this experiment of yours!"

"Has she hesitated to hurt *you*?" he demanded, a sudden flash in his eyes, a thrill in his voice.

"She has not done it ruthlessly, Eliot. For the love of Truth, of a great principle. So she *thinks*, anyway."

"For the love of herself! But I shall not hurt her—more than is for her good. Anyway, the very point in her philosophy that she's most insistent about is, that for the sake of Truth we must joyfully meet any suffering the gods may send to us. Stoically has she applied this philosophy to *you*. Let us see how she will apply it to herself! You question whether I respect her? I solemnly swear to you, Edith, I never respected or admired any woman more. She is splendid! But a more self-deceived young creature never trod our planet."

"And you really think she will so readily give up Robert and her theory for you?"

"I have the advantage on my side of being marriageable."

"Dorothea is not vulgarly husband-hunting!"

"There is nothing in this world Dorothea so craves as the experience of love and marriage."

"She and Robert say that marriage is not essential to love like theirs, though they admit that marriage does make love more complete."

"Huh!" he scoffed. "'More complete'! Oh, thunder! Look here, Edith, there is no expression of herself that Dorothea does not crave."

"Eliot," I protested gravely, "I am almost tempted to tell you that you do not look at their relation from a high plane."

"It's the plane from which Dorothea will be looking at it six weeks from now."

"But, then, if she should accept your love, you are prepared to marry her? Or hadn't you faced that contingency?"

"Time enough to settle that when I've shown her the falseness of her theory, the wrong she's doing—you."

There was something in his tone that gripped my heart and brought a lump to my throat. I could not answer.

But presently, not looking at him, I put a question to him. "And Robert? Where does he come out in all this?"

"At your side, I hope, dear child."

Again I shook my head without speaking.

"If you think it so hopeless," he gently asked, "why do you stay on here, Edith? I have wondered at your forbearance!"

"You know," I answered in a low voice, "what, up to last month, hindered my going. And now, in the midst of this ferment of gossip in the town, if I should go—"

"Robert would be mobbed!" he nodded. "And you'd care so much?"

"As much as I ever could have."

"And he," said Eliot bitterly, "would repudiate his own mother if she ceased to be of use to him!"

To me, the cruelty of these words of his was such that I could neither deny nor resent them.

He rose then to leave me. "I wanted you to understand, Edith, before I entered upon my rôle."

"It all seems very chimerical to me, Eliot. I can't think anything will come of it. Dorothea is too steadfast—"

"We'll see, we'll see."

"She is nothing if not steadfast," I maintained. "I'd as lief doubt the Angel Gabriel! And Robert is too deeply—enamored, to let himself be interfered with."

"We'll try it at least. It's worth trying. It will be immensely interesting, too, psychologically, to see Dorothea's theories, for which she's ready to die the

death of a martyr, 'fade into thin air' as soon as they pinch her."

That's all, Margaret. Tonight he begins, he says, to pay his court to her. I almost envy her the experience. He'll be a strong and a compelling lover, I'm sure. The whole thing is absurd, of course. Eliot will find himself snubbed for his pains. What say you to all this?

Yours always,

EDITH.

XIII

It's been going on for two weeks, now, Margaret, and is growing exciting! Eliot and I seldom see each other alone, and if we do, we never refer to it by so much as a look. He certainly is doing it as if he *meant* it. And if he started out only experimentally, he will surely end in earnest, and get himself burnt, so it looks to me.

As for Dorothea! You say you are consumed with curiosity to know how she responds to his advances. I can tell you in a word—she comes straight up to the bait! She couldn't come straighter! I sit and look on, or *stare* on, rather, as though I were witnessing a weird drama—a Miracle Play!

That very Sunday night after he had talked to me, he took the bull by the horns, as it were, by deliberately going to call on Dorothea while Robert was at church, Eliot's only chance of finding her alone. Robert, of course, as his custom is, arrived at her apartment as soon as church was out, and I can see his astonishment at finding Eliot there! I had an account of it (in substance) from Robert when he came home. Of course I read a lot into what he let drop, and I gathered that Eliot, having "got in his innings," felt perfectly complacent in staying on after Robert got there, until it grew so late that he and Robert had to leave together.

Robert was in a glow of triumph when he told me about it. "Even cynical old Eliot," he said, "has been so impressed with the truth that Dorothea and I have found, so uplifted by her ideals, that he actually went to call on her tonight.

"And you ought to have heard

them!" he went on enthusiastically. "It was genuinely stimulating, dear. Dorothea was at her best, I never saw her so inspired. Eliot's really vital response to her is so encouraging to her, to us both it so confirms what we feel we have proven in our friendship."

Two nights later, when Eliot again "sat him out," here in our own parlor, Robert was a trifle less enthusiastic, but still much "stimulated."

"You see, dear," he demonstrated to me that night when we were alone, "how true what I have told you, that marriage, or any other relation of love, need not, must not, shut out for us other vital relations with our fellow men of either sex. If, for example, Eliot and Dorothea should, as seems possible, find each other, how could it in the least degree affect *my* deep relation with her?"

"What she has to give would be spread out thinner, wouldn't it? It wouldn't be so concentrated."

"It would be deepened and enriched, Edith," he protested.

"You couldn't see her alone so often."

"Our spirits are *always* together, and shall be to all eternity!"

"How weird!" I said idiotically.

"When two souls have really met, my dear, bodily separation cannot affect their communion. In a room full of people any two who are at one are actually alone together, in vital touch; if even the ocean separated them, they would yet clasp hands spiritually."

"A sort of wireless," I suggested facetiously, causing Robert to shrug his shoulders in despair of me and walk out of the room.

Last night Dorothea again dined here; and after dinner, or rather after I had helped Mrs. Newbold to bed, I sat like a figurehead and listened to our guest and Eliot, Robert, meantime, restlessly pacing the floor, a little impatient, manifestly, for his hour alone with her; she, not at all impatient, but absorbed, flushed, radiant in her evidently deeply satisfying intercourse with Eliot.

Eliot's "receptive attitude," his sitting there before her, rapt, silent, adoring, was certainly not a characteristic "attitude," as she would have known

were she as keen as she is deep, for he is nothing if not positive, aggressive. Her faith, however, in the possibilities of her own special "truth" to work transformations in life and character is supreme. Hence her unbounded, her pathetic credulity. It made me almost indignant with Eliot, though I declare a doubt did assail me as to whether her truth had not really transformed him, in such a deadly solemnity does he, in these days, "move and walk and have his being."

"A work of art," Dorothea was saying, "unless it express something universal, if it is a mere bit of local color with no infinite significance, is worthless."

"I *used* to feel," said Eliot humbly, "that even 'a bit of local color' might be grounded in the Absolute, even as the pink hollow of a tiny sea shell or the passing violet cloud at sunset are expressions of the infinite and universal Beauty."

"Of course, but often our 'local color' stories or pictures are mere photographs, impressed with no spark of imagination, no germ of an uplifting ideal."

"Yes," Eliot granted, "too much of our literature is mere photography. And though good photography is useful in its place, it is not, as you say, imaginative art."

"And the art that does not speak to us with high purpose from the very heavens," said Dorothea, "is unworthy, even as the *life* is unworthy that is not built upon absolute ideals."

"It seemed to me when I first knew you," said Eliot musingly, "that your standards were too high 'for human nature's daily food.' But now—well, you've inspired me to meet your high challenge, Dorothea. I accept it."

He leaned forward, holding out his firm, well shaped hand, and Dorothea, glowing, laid her own in his, and their eyes met for an instant solemnly.

I looked on in wonder, incredulous that he could be acting a part. I am not sure, now, that he didn't mean it.

"The daily food that human nature needs is just that," she said; "nothing less than the infinite! Our souls starve

on any other daily food. It alone gives life meaning and value. I wish," she went on, leaning back again in her chair and wearing her most prophetlike countenance, "that I might give you each day, my friend, just a word that could illumine that day for you so that you might live it with the stimulating consciousness that whatever you have known of spiritual heroism in the most exalted lives may be in *your* life—and in mine!"

Eliot rose impetuously and moved to her side.

"Let us go out—into the open! Come and walk with me under the stars! I must have infinite space about me when I talk with you!"

She rose at once, a flash of joy in the eyes she lifted to his. Instinctively, Robert's hand went out to stay her as in his restless walking about the room he reached her side.

"Dorothea! Our hour alone together?" he asked in a low tone. "What becomes of it?"

"You are always with me, Robert—always," she answered with gentle earnestness, laying her hand on his and looking up at him with a gaze that he returned adoringly, but with eager protest against her withdrawal.

"Robert," I heard her answer his look, unmindful of me, no doubt entirely forgetful of my presence, "if you would live up to the truth we know—you and I—you must gladly see me go forth to the spiritual refreshment of communion with another true soul."

"Yes, Dorothea—I know—I do."

But I watched his white, pained face as Eliot followed her out of the room to the hall, and, Margaret, his suffering smote me miserably. I knew what he was feeling—had I not drunk full deep of this cup? I could not bear to see it at his lips! Yes, I know that by all that has been writ in prose or line of a woman's jealous love, I should have triumphed in this just retribution of his; exulted in his pain, who had so ruthlessly dealt just such pangs to me! Did I, then, not truly love him, if all that I felt now was a fierce motherly pity at sight of his suffering, a passionate in-

dignation against those who selfishly inflicted it?

With sudden resolution, I rose and followed them out to the hall, where Eliot was helping Dorothea on with her long fur cloak. I stepped in front of her and spoke.

"Robert will be so bitterly disappointed, Dorothea, if he loses his evening with you."

"That would be an unworthy attitude, Edith, dear, for Robert to take toward our Friendship," she gravely, sweetly replied.

I looked into the face of this woman who professed to love my husband so much more "divinely" and deeply than I did, searching in vain for the compassion which wrung the heart of his rejected and slighted wife. Her radiant, uplifted countenance betrayed only her ecstasy in the absorbing, satisfying new interest that had come to her through Eliot's full and wonderful "response" to her.

I turned to Eliot. "Don't!" I said wretchedly. "Don't hurt Robert like this! How can you be so pitiless, Eliot?"

"Pity the man whom I leave with *you?*" he retorted almost roughly, and turning away from me, opened the door for Dorothea.

They went out together.

Now, Margaret, what do you make of this anomaly of a man?

EDITH.

XIV

THE atmosphere of our small circle is electric, dear Margaret! I nearly go mad trying to read the signs. Eliot's grave mien is a mask that I cannot penetrate. Robert's suffering is so real that even Eliot is touched by it, and his mother tries to make him take pills. Dorothea seems to be the only happy one among us, but she is *so* happy, so triumphant (what greater glory hath a woman than the knowledge that she is loved by a strong man?) that she makes up for the gravity of all the rest of us.

The above I wrote a week ago and meantime—Oh, meantime! For seven

days Eliot has gone about with the pallor and the solemnity of a Hamlet; Robert with a ray of hope in his lifeless eyes; and Dorothea! Well, Margaret, if ever a soul was in hell, Dorothea has been there in this past week. Never have I seen so sudden, so shocking a change in the whole aspect and bearing of anyone. She looks like a martyr before the Inquisition. I could never wish a hated enemy to suffer what she is evidently suffering.

Robert, before going out to choir rehearsal tonight, was so overcharged with his mingled triumph and anxiety that he could not repress himself, but let out to me what it is that is making him take heart, while at the same time it is torturing Dorothea and blanching Eliot's somber countenance.

"It did seem to me from the first, Edith," he began, "quite incredible that a brusque, conceited fellow like Eliot should have so 'lost himself' as really to have found and met a soul like Dorothea. I always felt that his was a nature not fine enough to meet hers vitally. Still, he did seem so receptive, so responsive, that he deceived not only Dorothea and me, but even himself. He *thought* that he and Dorothea were at one. He even went so far as to agree with her that the Universe had united them in the love that leads to marriage—"

"Agree with *her?*" I questioned. "She proposed, then?"

"Proposed!" he repeated with scorn for my persistently prosaic way of looking at high things. "It was she who first suggested—well, marriage, yes—and Eliot, after going so far as to admit that he thought the Universe had united him and her so vitally as to justify marriage—indeed, as to make marriage, as she said, imperative—turns about and queers himself—eh, I mean denies, virtually, the great truth he thought he held in common with her, by insisting that *he*, by the way, considered love to be exclusive; that he could not dream of marrying a woman who 'loved another man' and that man married; that she must of course make her choice between him and me. Poor Dorothea! It has

been a frightful shock to her to learn that after all his seeming devotion to the loftiest ideals in thought and life, he should be so hopelessly commonplace! She has, of course, tried to make him see the falsity of his attitude, and what an impossible condition he makes to their union. But would you believe it? He is perfectly obdurate! He sticks right to it that he will share her love with none; that she must make her choice, or he will go out of her life forever. I have tried to show her, in her deep disappointment in him, how unworthy he is of her, if, after having all this time basked under her influence, he can still hold to and insist upon such crude ideas and principles! But she clings to a raft of hope that she may yet bring him to a more fundamental understanding of what love really is to those who ground it in the Absolute. He never *will* see, though, I know him too well! *His* ideal of love!" he repeated scornfully. "It's that of the vaudeville stage!"

I wondered whether poor Robert was speaking the truth more nearly than he dreamed!

"If it is only 'union in the Absolute' that constitutes love," I humbly inquired, "why, then, when Dorothea sees that Eliot is so hopelessly far from her in that which alone unites two souls, does she not cease to love? Why does she suffer just as we 'commonplace' people do when 'disappointed in love,' as they say on the vaudeville stage?"

"Who would not suffer in such a shock as she has undergone, having believed her own high truth confirmed by another soul's vision of the same light, only to find that that other soul was all the time immersed in dense materialism?"

"When you suffered—and when I suffered," I added in a low voice, "Dorothea said that suffering was not possible on the plane of the gods; that we suffered because we were 'unworthy,' 'blind,' 'living on a low plane.' I'm beginning to think, Robert, that she isn't consistent."

"For the time being, her serenity is disturbed," he gravely admitted. "She will of course quickly recover herself.

You see, Edith, Dorothea had found such happiness in her supposed love for Eliot that she cannot give it up without a struggle to keep it! But," he added confidently, "she will conquer, and soon. And then—"

He checked his exuberant hopefulness, came to my side and kissed me tenderly.

"Dear little girl, this talk with you has comforted me a lot! You *are* a good child—even if you are a little Philistine!"

With another kiss he left me, and went away to his evening's work.

And now—will she yield to Eliot's condition, or "stand by her guns"? Robert, I can see, hasn't an instant's doubt of her. It seems impossible to doubt Dorothea's strength and loyalty. If the lover were a lesser man than Eliot, I should have all Robert's confidence. But to give up the love of a man like Eliot for a theory—well, that, too, seems impossible. So there you are.

Your loving

EDITH.

XV

DEAREST MARGARET:

Four more days we had of Dorothea's distraught aspect of woe, and then one afternoon Robert, looking more like a dead man than himself, came to me in my room and handed me a letter.

"Read it!" he hoarsely commanded me; and while he sat huddled in an arm-chair before the fire, I read. The letter was addressed to him and it was from Dorothea.

Here it is:

"I write to you tonight, the last time I shall ever write to you, to repudiate you; to deny the 'truth' we thought we had found together; to tell you that at last my eyes are open to the horrible wrong I have been doing. My love for Eliot has revealed to me many things to which I was blind and deaf. I cannot forgive myself for the bitter mistakes which I made in my blindness, but neither can I forgive *you*, who, being a man and *married*, must have known in your heart all along what Eliot has made me

see—how wholly wrong our relation of closest intimacy was—what a wrong to your wife; what a menace to me, an unsuspicious, inexperienced maiden; what a danger to *you*. All this you must have known, yet you led me on. When I think how you have dared to *kiss* me; how you persuaded me of the absolute rightness and purity and spirituality of that expression (which none but your wife should have received from you) my indignation burns me! Almost had you made it impossible for me ever to know this great happiness which I am about to realize in my marriage. What right had you to deceive me so, in my youth and inexperience?

"I must do you the justice to admit that you, too, were self-deceived. But you had less excuse for being so, and it is only the miserable weakness of your character that made such self-deception possible in your case.

"All my life long I must carry with me the memory of my most unjustifiable relation with you. It is only by absolutely repudiating it that I can convince Eliot of my deep and earnest realization of its wrong, and atone to him for the blot on the soul of the woman to whom he gives his strong and manly love.

"If you were not his brother, I should wish never again to see your face. As it is, I shall hope, after a time, to feel more tolerant toward the great wrong you have done me.

"DOROTHEA WORTHINGTON."

Twice, Margaret, I read it over—this unbelievable epistle—before I ventured to lift my eyes to Robert huddled in the chair before the fire. If Dorothea could at that moment have looked upon her work. But no, it would only have met her scorn. "Miserable weakness" she would have called his abject misery, impatient as she always is with anything that makes for her own discomfort. Robert did look the wreck of himself, all his manhood gone out of him in his utter humiliation and anguish.

"Ruthless, cruel, selfish woman!" I gasped when I could find speech. "*You* led *her* on, she tells you, when every glance of her eyes, every tone of

her voice invites, entices, enthralls both men and women! when nothing is sacred enough to be safe from her pitiless selfishness! No sacrifice too great for others to make for her! Oh," I cried out, "she leads everyone by the nose whom she cares to, and she talks of your leading *her* on! Why," I exclaimed, walking about the room in my excitement, "it is even possible that she does love Eliot, since for the first time in her life she's been led instead of leading—for the first time found a master. Maybe she actually does love him! No," I changed my mind, "she is incapable of loving anyone more than she loves herself—incapable of it!"

I went to Robert and put my hands on his shoulders. He looked so strange, I was frightened.

"Robert! Don't take it like this! You must not; you will be ill! Rouse yourself, be a man and meet it—make her *ashamed* of this letter!"

"Edith," he whispered hoarsely, "get on your hat and coat and come with me. I can't go alone! Come with me to her. *You* tell her how mistaken she is, how wrongly Eliot (curse him!) has persuaded her to forswear all that was so sacred to her and me. Tell her of *your* acquiescence, then she cannot think of our relation in the gross way that Eliot has led her to think, poisoning her pure mind with his base materialism! How could she be so misled?" he cried out in his misery. "Will you come, Edith? Will you do this for me?"

I would have done any fool thing to quiet him, so wild he looked.

"At least we will go out for a walk, Robert," I answered soothingly, feeling as though I were dealing with a demented person that must be humored.

It was four o'clock, and the afternoon, though cold even for February, was so fair that about everyone we knew was on the street. I saw how curiously people stared at us. We are not often seen anywhere together these days, and Robert looked so strange.

To my distress, I found I could not dissuade him from his purpose to go to Dorothea. There was something so abnormal about him that I dared not

leave him, and impossible as it seemed to me to do it, I just had to go with him. And indeed, by the time we reached her apartment, I was actually glad of a shelter from curious eyes.

Dorothea herself opened the door to us.

I expected to find, now that her struggle was over and her choice made, that her distraught and pallid aspect of the past two weeks would have changed to her old radiance; that she would be ecstatic, triumphant in the prospect of her marriage with the man she *now* thought she loved.

But to my bewilderment, Robert himself did not appear more grief-stricken than did she with her white, drawn lips and wild, haggard eyes.

As her glance fell upon Robert, she reared like a spirited horse. "You—you dare to come here—after my letter?"

Robert, his eyes fixed upon hers, staggered past her into the room.

"I think he doesn't quite know what he is doing," I whispered fearfully to her. "I had to come with him, I was afraid to let him be alone."

She stepped aside to let me come in, then closed the door. I turned around—to find myself face to face with Eliot standing in the middle of the floor!

He was white to the lips, yet I could see that he only, among us all, had himself in hand.

There we stood, the four of us—Robert panting as though he had been running a race, and glaring at his brother with such a look of hate that my very soul turned sick to see it; Dorothea leaning against the closed door, her hands hanging clasped in front of her; I a few feet from her at Robert's side; and Eliot in the middle of the room.

It was to Eliot that the rest of us looked, who had wrought all this havoc!

"See, Eliot, what you have done!" I cried as I laid my hand on Robert's.

"The fate of the meddler always!" he admitted bitterly. "And the road to hell is paved with good intentions! Try to save another from the mire and you only push him deeper in and fall in yourself! You can't live another's life for him! Not philanthropy, but mind-your-

own-business, shall be *my* rôle hereafter!"

"Shut up your canting moralizing!" cried Robert, his voice hoarse and unnatural. "This devilish work of yours you'll undo, or by God, I'll shoot you! You marry her! You're not fit to touch her beautiful hands! Dorothea!" he turned beseechingly to her, "you are mistaken, you are blinded! Edith herself acquiesces in our—"

"Edith would agree to anything, Robert, when she sees you in misery like this." Eliot's tone was all compassion. "Because she never thinks of herself. It was for that reason that I had to think for her, to protect her from your cruel selfishness, Rob, yours and"—he added gravely, reluctantly—"Dorothea's! I've made a horrible mess of it. I'd better have let things take their course! But I could not look on and see Edith wronged, so unhappy, while you two flaunted your ecstasy. Just try to realize—both of you—that all you are suffering now, *she* suffered; and your unhappiness, unlike hers, comes from your own wrongdoing, your absorption in yourselves at the expense of another whom you had no right to sacrifice!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Robert. "You speak in that school-master tone to *her*—to Dorothea—to the woman you are going to marry!"

Eliot turned white; Dorothea's lips twitched, and for a moment there was silence. Then at last Dorothea spoke.

"He is not going to marry me."

"Why? Why?" demanded Robert, a gleam of hope in his wild eyes. "You do *not* love him, then, Dorothea? You realize his unworthiness, his—"

"I love him. He sought, or I thought he sought, my love, and he won it—and now—he forswears it all!"

Robert looked from her to his brother, bewildered, dazed. "*He* forswears it!"

"My whole purpose," Eliot tried to explain, "was to show to both of you how hollow were your professions and theories. I have accomplished it, but I took an inexcusable means of doing it. I see that now—for, Dorothea," he turned to her, his voice deep with feeling, "the man doesn't live who wouldn't

prefer to make you happy rather than cause you pain."

"Did you expect to accomplish it without causing me pain, and by such means?" she bitterly inquired.

"No, I did not. But I knew how strong you were, and life's lessons are learned only through travail. What I did not foresee was that you would care like this, as you do," he said miserably; "and that Robert would be reduced to this pass. But let both of you bear in mind, you are only suffering what you made Edith suffer."

"But what in Heaven's name!" cried Robert. "*You* to refuse the gift of the gods—Dorothea's love!"

"I do not refuse her love. I have always cared for her. So has my mother. So do all her pupils. So does everyone who knows her. Even Edith doesn't hate her—such grace is Dorothea's to win all hearts. But—the gods forgive me—I've never been in love with her!"

"And you had the presumption," demanded Robert, "to deceive her into thinking you were?"

"As she deceived you and herself. In my case, to be sure, the deception was with deliberate intent."

"And was therefore brutal!" breathed Dorothea.

"Not quite so brutal," he gently protested, "as your own ruthless infliction of pain upon Edith, for I did it for the sake of truth and right (which you and Robert value so highly), while you did it in an abandoned self-seeking. You have admitted as much to me, Dorothea, to me and to Robert."

"I admit it. But couldn't you have brought me to see the truth and the right without humiliating me like this—without bringing me to the very dust?"

"I attacked your one vulnerable, albeit lovable, spot, Dorothea, your love of being loved. There was no other approach open, I knew that. If I had tried convincing you through any other avenue than your—your self-love, Dorothea (forgive me!), you would only have pitied my 'low plane of thought,' and gone on in your own way."

"What wonderful insight into my

character!" she said, her lips scornful, but her eyes anguished.

"Is this present ordeal too great a price to pay, Dorothea, for redemption from such grave errors?" he earnestly asked her.

Her face dropped into her hands and her shoulders shook. Eliot made a movement to her side, but Robert, flinging off my hand, was there before him, his arm about her, imploring her to turn to him in her strait, who was wholly and forever hers, but she broke from him with a shudder of repulsion which even he, frenzied as he was, could not fail to understand. He staggered back under it, his face ashen.

"You will answer to me for this!" he turned upon Eliot; "for your injury to her and to me! If it were not for your damnable interference—"

"Stop!" Dorothea commanded him. "Eliot is right—I never loved you—I only loved your devotion and what I thought it gave me of the highest and noblest in life. I was pitifully deluded. Perhaps some day I may feel thankful to Eliot for this bitter lesson—but *now*—"

Then she stopped—her bosom heaving. She turned her white face to me, and coming to me, took my hands in hers, gazing at me with such a look of heartache and despair that my own heart seemed filled with her woe.

"I can't ask or expect you to forgive me, Edith. I have wronged you too deeply. And yet—you, the wronged one, are not the one to be pitied. You have no cause for shame and bitter regret. It is *you* who have lived in the heights, while I, a selfish fool, have been half scorning your commonplaceness! Oh, Edith, it is you who are favored of the gods! If you only knew—"

"Dorothea!" Eliot spoke her name in a low warning voice.

She stopped; her head drooped, her lips quivered and noiseless sobs seemed fairly to rend her.

Then suddenly, with one quick movement, she had gone from the room.

With a cry like an animal's, Robert sprang toward Eliot. But I was between them and, white with terror, I

clung to my husband to hold him back. He tried to thrust me off, but I clung with all my strength and almost screamed to Eliot to go.

"Robert is not responsible! Go, go! I have known all afternoon that he was beside himself!"

"Leave you here alone with a mad-man?"

Before I could think, he had seized Robert's arms and had pinioned them at his back.

"Telephone for a taxicab," he ordered me. "In the hall!"

I heard them wrestling while in agony I stood at the telephone. When, after a minute, I returned to the room, Robert was lying back, white and weak, in a big chair, and Eliot was at his side, his hand on his shoulder.

In a few moments we were all three on our way home.

All this occurred this afternoon, Margaret. It is now eleven o'clock. Robert is in bed, ill and prostrated. Heaven knows what strange tidings I may soon be sending to you!

EDITH.

XVI

DEAR MARGARET:

We are in deep trouble. Robert was taken last Thursday to the Lansdale Sanitarium to be treated for a complete nervous breakdown.

Dorothea has resigned. I have the sole management of the Conservatory, Eliot helping me wherever my knowledge of business is wanting.

Mrs. Newbold's anxiety and distress about Robert have greatly prostrated her. In this state of affairs you will understand my not writing often or at length. My hands are full.

Eliot is dreadfully cast down because of Robert, yet he cannot justly reproach himself.

As for Dorothea, Eliot himself says he knows that she will soon rally and find consolation for herself; that she can't stand being long without the stimulus of a love affair in her life.

"To be sure, I shall sleep more peacefully when I hear of her betrothal," he admits.

One day before poor Robert was taken away, he said to me: "If you, Edith, had ever really loved me, you would have killed Dorothea! You couldn't have cared for me!"

"I never felt inclined to kill Dorothea, if that's any proof that I couldn't have loved you."

"But you certainly did love me," he affirmed perversely. "So why did you bear it so quietly when she came between us? You see, now, that she did come between us, Edith? I see many things now!" He was looking at me furtively, curiously. "You did love me, you know, Edith."

"Yes, Robert."

"And now?"

"When you are breaking your heart for another woman?"

"What fools men are!" he said bitterly. "You did love me—with all your soul, and she does not care what I bear for her sake, or what becomes of me. And for her I have lost you."

I went to him. "You have not lost me. I am with you."

"And your heart—is *that* with me?"

"When yours belongs to her, Robert?"

He sighed and gave it up.

Just now, my daily letters to him at the Sanitarium, my care of his poor mother, the housekeeping and the Conservatory, together with my anxiety, even dread, about Robert, for he is in a very abnormal state of mind and nerves—all this takes so much out of me that by the end of each day I'm limp with fatigue. If I do not write, you'll know there is no change in present conditions.

Your loving

EDITH.

XVII

DEAR MARGARET:

Your letters have comforted me—to the extent, at least, that it is sweet to know you are feeling with me in this terrible time of horror and blackness. Oh, Margaret, that my happy marriage should end in such a tragedy as this!

We have succeeded in concealing from Mrs. Newbold that Robert took his own life. It would kill her to know that.

I am staying on here because I cannot leave her, she clings to me so pitifully. I keep right on with the Conservatory and it prospers.

Eliot seems turned to stone with the shock and horror of Robert's death.

In the face of this awful thing that has come to us, I ask myself why do women want to bring children into the world? No mother could have had greater pride and satisfaction in a son than Mrs. Newbold had in Robert—and it has ended like this!

I find I can't write yet, Margaret. Give me time.

EDITH.

XVIII

(Five months later.)

THE gloom of this house is so dreadful that I must take refuge from it in an occasional talk with you, dear, though I fear I only communicate our sadness, and I would be loth to do that—very loth indeed to cast any least shadow upon the great happiness that has come to you, my dear, in your betrothal to that splendid man, one of the rare men of this planet, to whose keeping I, who love you so, can commit you with such perfect trust and confidence! I am so deeply glad for you, Margaret. In spite of my own tragic experiences, I am not cynical, but only hopeful of all good for you. Eliot says the gods give us all the happiness we are capable of and ready for. If that be true, what blessedness should be yours!

Mrs. Newbold is failing rapidly. Eliot's affection for her is so strong, it is pathetic to see how desperately he tries to hold her back.

When her end comes (and we all know her time is short) of course I shall have to go away, at least from this house if not from the town.

My future looks even more blank and dreary to me than the present.

But I must not write in this vein to you, at this most precious time of all your life.

With my blessing, Margaret,
Your faithful and loving

EDITH.

XIX

(Four months later.)

DEAR MARGARET:

I am thankful to tell you that Mrs. Newbold's end was without a struggle and altogether peaceful. For Eliot's sake I was so thankful for that.

Eliot is very sad, very subdued, for his love for his mother was not only filial, her dependence upon him through so many years of her widowhood has made him feel almost a paternal care for her. And one who has been cared for in that way leaves such an empty place.

His mother's sister is still here and will remain indefinitely. Meantime, as I shall keep on with the Conservatory, I am preparing to go to a boarding-house at once.

I wrote so far last night. It is now five o'clock in the morning, the household is asleep and I, too wakeful to lie in bed, am sitting up in bathrobe and slippers writing to you—to tell you, dear, that since writing the above, my world has, all in a few hours, become transformed for me; that no longer is my future a dead blank; my days a frenzied rush of work to induce forgetfulness; my heart almost broken with loneliness!

Last night, as I sat writing to you in the sitting room, Eliot came to me there and sat with me before the cosy open fire.

I felt in every nerve of me how this room was haunted for him; what pain it was to him to come into it at all, and I wondered what had brought him to me here. For, Margaret, in all these days since Robert's death, my relations with him have been so formal, more so than when Robert lived, that I knew it was not a mere offhand desire to sit and talk with me, but some definite purpose that had brought him.

"You are packing up to leave, are you?" he began, and I thought his tone so cold and brusque that I would have been a bit hurt but that I felt there was no room in his heart, just now in his grief, for me and my affairs, and that his coming to me to speak of my going was merely a perfunctory kindness. So I

was not prepared for the breaking of the flood in such a torrent as it came upon me.

"To leave me?" he went on. "And you thought that I would let you go without making the fight of my life to keep you by me!"

He turned suddenly and clasped my hands, and his eyes held mine with a look which made me realize that he was, all at once after months of self-restraint, letting himself go in a headlong tide of emotion, passion, what you will.

I had long known that if love ever did come to Eliot, it would be a life and death issue; but it had not seemed possible that so slight a creature as I could call forth the sort of love I felt he was capable of.

"To keep you by me, Edith, for the rest of your life! God knows I've been patient waiting for the time to ripen when I might hope for you; determined not to destroy my one chance of a satisfying happiness by prematurely thrusting upon you an unwelcome and undesired love! God knows what it has cost me to hold myself in check all these months, when every drop of blood in me has cried out for you! You—the only woman to whom I ever gave a serious thought. Now—have I been so hard with myself for nothing? Or"—he asked, or rather demanded of me, his suddenly unrestrained feeling fairly leaping out to me from his shining countenance—"have I earned you, Edith?"

I felt dazed with the suddenness, the dazzling brightness of the light he had so unexpectedly turned upon my gloom.

"You love me, Eliot?" I stupidly inquired. "And have loved me for a long time?"

"Edith, haven't you known it? Can it be possible that the rein I've kept upon myself has concealed from you what you are to me?"

"I have known you were fond of me, because you have been so good to me. But that you loved me—"

"From the first hour, Edith, that I knew you, I think you held me in the hollow of your hand. From the day you entered this house, little as you dreamed

of it, I felt your charm utterly—yes, as absolutely as I feel it now!"

"Oh, not from the first—you forget. Don't you know what a bear you were to me at first?"

"Of course I didn't believe in you at first, and I thought the almost uncanny fascination you had for me was only a skin-deep attraction, which would depart as soon as I had proved you to be like all other girls, shallow, selfish, vain and self-conscious. But, as from day to day I came to know you here in our home, I realized more and more the reality of that charm of yours, the deep, the fundamental attraction you had for me! Do you remember I once told you your playing had distinction; a unique quality all its own; that it seemed to me to express the very essence of womanliness? That's because, Edith, it expresses yourself—and you are wholly womanly! Your presence here in our home transformed it into a real home for my soul, Edith. All day long at my work, my heart was singing a *Te Deum* of thankfulness for you, though you were not mine and I never dreamed you ever could be. 'This weary old planet isn't half bad after all,' I used to say to myself, when every now and then in the midst of my work it would suddenly flash upon me that this world in which I lived held Edith—Edith—that in a few hours I would be in the same house with her; in the same room; seated at table with her; hear her voice; her droll talk; her sweet laugh; look, once in a while, into her wide, dark eyes! It was enough happiness—since I could not have all— And now the time has come when I may hope for all?"

If this were a novel instead of a letter, or if it were about anyone but myself, I might describe for you here a very thrilling love scene, my friend. But seeing that I myself am the heroine of the episode I am recording, decency requires that I shall conclude as you and I used to end up the stories we wrote in our first teens, "Suffice it to say that they—and so forth."

But seriously, and to return, suffice it to say that such wooing as Eliot's would, I think, have quickly won a less suscep-

tible heart than mine, even if I had not already, as I think you must long ago have guessed, found in him all that my first love left unsatisfied and disappointed. "When half-gods go, the gods arrive," you know, and that stands for these two loves of my life. Such a rock of strength Eliot is to my weakness, Margaret! Such a haven after the storms I have weathered! It is true, as he says, that I am the only woman to whom he

ever gave a thought, and I trust his constancy as I know of my own. I am happy, dear—so deeply happy! I who had thought, through so many dark months, that all joy was over forever for me! I know how glad you will be for me, how this news will add a ray of brightness to the glory of your own great love!

Your transformed
EDITH.



A POET AND A WOMAN

By ARTHUR STRINGER

YOU bent above the grave and read the stone
Where long ago—I saw your quick tears start—
Some singer, unremembered and unknown,
Had woven into song his broken heart.

And then you asked if only loss and death
Moved man to truer song and brought the need
Of music's balm and that assuaging breath
Which falls so poignantly from lips that bleed.

You asked how I, who knew and mourned no dead,
Could hope for music, since its chords must spring
From death and sorrow—and I only said:
"Have I not my dead selves of which to sing?"



THE Age of Discretion is reached when one has learned to be indiscreet—discreetly.

THE BLACK REACH

By MARY GLASCOCK

AMERY had come up the night before in a driving, blustery rain, and all morning, to his disgust, the weather shifted between fretful showers and watery sunshine.

Impatiently he tramped the long porch of the Mountain House, kicking the black setter from a comfortable doze, waiting for the moody weather to clear. The clouds really did seem thinning over the notch, and there was a possibility, a scant possibility, if the wind veered, that there might be some afternoon fishing.

The big splint-bottomed chair he usually occupied was usurped, and the usurper sat staring at him. Amery strode through the mud to the barn where Dan, the man of all work, who was supposed to be weather wise, was sharpening an axe. When he returned, the boy smiled amusedly at his churlish impatience.

At noon the clouds parted, and a bar of sunlight sent them scurrying down the sky. Amery hurried into his fishing togs and came to the porch.

"Do you mind if I go with you?" the boy in the chair asked bluntly.

The man mumbled gruffly an unintelligible answer.

Down the trail the heady smell of earth after the rain exhilarated him, and he was half sorry for his gruffness—the boy was about the same age. But he set his lips and put the pain of remembered things from him.

A river mist was rising in cloudy spirals, swathing the tree boles in soft blur while the tops burned in golden fire. The thinning clouds over the notch were fulfilling their promise gloriously. In the thickets a choir invisible of birds

lifted a chant. He thought he heard the pad of crutches back of him and looked over his shoulder, pretending to examine the fastening of his landing net, but saw nothing. The trail was lined with tangle of briar. A sprawling blackberry with ruby-veined leaves whipped across his path and almost tripped him; a twig of a low, bushy Judas tree caught in the pocket of his fishing coat, ripping a stitch or two, and big drops of water splashed from the tantalizing overhanging wild grape straight down his open shirt collar. Was that a low laugh? Again he looked over his shoulder and frowned in the face of a fat robin that chuckled oilily and flew away. It was uncomfortable, this sensation of being followed when he wished to be alone.

Strong sunshine shredded the mist, and all at once each rain wet tree and sodden bush sparkled in iridescent colors. Freshness and cleanness were everywhere, and smell of pine. That piney fragrance, pungent, sweet, dizzying to the sense, made it good to live in a rain-washed world.

Amery drew in the long breath of a man just wakened, and pushed through the wet underbrush, rod a-shoulder, to the river. There he fell to fishing, and for a time was at peace with the world and himself. The complexities of the "gentle art" left no room for thoughts that tugged and hurt.

It crossed his mind hazily that he was sorry he had spoken sharply to the lad. He remembered that a pair of crutches had stood by the chair. That was why he had conjured up that illusion on the trail.

But he put the subject from him—these things were quite outside the pale

of his life. He had no concern with feeling, emotion of any sort—he had quite done with that. And, after all, it was not without satisfaction that he felt he had achieved the calm of being sufficient unto himself.

With a dexterous swing he cast across the riffle. The trout were rising freely, and, every muscle alert, he enjoyed the fine fight the fish were putting up, for a pound rainbow on the Sacramento is game to the tip of his tail, and the spoil is only to the skillful. That was one of the satisfactions of the sport to him—he felt that he was giving his antagonist a square deal. Still, he kept that uncomfortable feeling of being watched; he was sure he heard an appreciative long drawn exclamation when he netted a two-pounder. But a tricking wind had joined the sun and fluttered the willow leaves until you could make most any sound out of the rustle of them. Voices are always murmuring on the stream, for the spirit of Pan still whispers in the leaves, complains under the young willows and breathes dolorous ghost sighs through the ripples of the river. All this you can hear if you are pure in heart and alone and will listen.

He decided to leave the palisades for later fishing, and swung along the road to the willow pool, where heavy bush, crowding the bank, made deeper shadow of the afternoon water.

He waded waist deep into the river, scorning rubber boots as being fit only for a man of age; besides, he liked space for free casting. Here he lost the sense of being watched. Just before sundown he had the limit, and his basket was a weight even to his strong back. There was satisfaction in the hardly won triumph—the satisfaction of the conqueror. But—was it loneliness? The thought struck him, as it always did in the relaxation of a thing finished, that there was no one to care a whit whether his basket sagged heavy with success or was light with failure. He had courted solitude; he had it. But—

Before he knew it, the mountains flung deep shadows across the river, shadows that moved slowly up the bank, up the other side over further mountains like

ghostly creeping things of night. The wing of a homing hawk slanted darkly across the cañon. It was full time to be moving, and he started briskly down the river trail.

“Good sport today? How many?” The boy came toward him. The usual forbidding frown creased Amery’s forehead; he turned away. “Would you mind my going up the trail with you? It’s kind of nasty over the lumpy ground with these sticks in the dark.”

The boy shivered, and Amery, looking at him closer, saw that he was slim and frail—a wasted slip of a lad moving through the dusk.

“That first fellow you landed put up a good fight. Gee, but you can cast!” the boy said admiringly. “I wanted to see how many you’d bring in—they haven’t been rising lately—and I had a bet with Dan on you. May I have a look?”

Amery ungraciously opened his basket.

“My! You’re a winner!”

Praise of a fisherman’s skill is the warming way to the cockles of his heart, and Amery unbent.

“Didn’t you find it cold waiting?” he asked curtly.

The boy nodded. “Rather; but I’m used to being alone. I’m out of the game,” he said quietly with a queer twist of his mouth. “My people can’t get used to this sort of thing—they’re mostly going about; they’re off to the golf tournament at Del Monte—and I’m up here for a time to pull myself together. I followed you down here. It was sort of a sneak, I know, but this beastly thinking’s seven devils to torment you, so I thought—”

“How old are you?” Amery demanded abruptly.

“Eighteen. I had a first rate chance at the ’varsity this year—my freshman year.”

Silence settled between the two. Amery slowed his pace and the twist of the boy’s mouth set to a grim, dogged line.

“Accident?” Amery asked shortly.

“No,” the boy said passionately. “If I’d only been laid out in the game—

anywhere when I was doing something!" The words jerked from him. "But it came suddenly, when I was in training—something inside. After the first big practice game it was all up with me." Amery started to speak. "Don't say you're sorry for me! I won't stand for that. That's why I came up here alone. It's something I've got to grin and bear, because—it will never be any better. How was it up the river? It's slow going for me yet or I'd stalked you up there." He laughed mirthlessly.

It had grown so dark that Amery struck a match to light the trail, then forged ahead.

"Would you mind waiting a bit till I get my wind?" the boy called.

Amery leaned against the big pine. "There was another boy," he said half to himself, "that was to have been on the team—an accident—the boy never played—he was killed." The words were forced and hard. It was the first time he had spoken of him in all these passing years.

The boy came nearer, and resting on one crutch laid his hand on the man's arm.

"Mr. Amery, the boy would rather have it that way than this. Believe me—I know."

Side by side the man and the boy came to the porch, and it was the boy who called out the news of the great catch; it was the boy who fetched the scales and superintended the weighing—and it was the record catch of the season at the Mountain House.

Amery went to his room with a queer whirl in his head. Sympathy he had shut out of his life long ago, when a careless chauffeur had sent the machine off the grade—and in a flash wife and boy had been snatched from him. From that day he looked upon an empty world. It was as if the heart had gone out of the man and he had become a successful working machine. Men respected his integrity, his sagacity, but did not seek his company. When they met him they involuntarily, without knowing why, crossed to the sunny side of the street. In the hardening he had put away all kinship to human kind. He neither pit-

ied nor would be pitied, and even at fifty, with goodly years ahead, his features had taken on the set of sixty. Now this boy—He would not think; his nerves must be unstrung by the long tramp of the day; he flung himself on the bed—but not to sleep.

The next morning the boy met him at the foot of the stairs that ended on the porch.

"Which way today?" he asked.

"The Black Reach," Amery snapped—not graciously—unstrapping his fly book and running over the contents.

"I'd like to go. I sha'n't be in your way, for I have to go by easy stages. I'll meet you at lunch hour." He waved his hand to the man's back disappearing down the trail.

In broad daylight Amery was ashamed of the emotion of the night, and his looks were of the grimmest. His mouth was stern and straight—harder than flint to strike a smile of human kindness from, they said at the club. To him his fellow men were only so many phantom actors stalking through the play of life in which with him they had been cast. He would not soften now, would not leave a vincible spot. He would go past the Black Reach to Conant's, as far up the river as possible. He could not be bothered with a chattering, lame boy; he would not have the one relaxation that clung to his self-driven life ruined. This free month in the mountains was the only one of the twelve that he lived. Why should the Black Reach be spoiled for him? It was his favorite ground; he liked the place; he liked the name—it fitted into his mood. No one had a right to creep into the black reach of his life.

He went to Conant's, unreasonable anger dogging his steps, and no fish was lured to his fly. Changing his cast, slowly he doubled back upon his steps until the shadows shortened under the pines; then he knew it was noon. Unconsciously he had neared the Reach, which belied its name in the full tide of the sun. Some day, long ago, hoary Shasta must have spilled a burning broth from her cauldron on Crater peak into the Sacramento for cooling. And

there it stayed, hardened into fine cool niches and hidden shelves for trout to tuck away in. The steep hills on each side of the river were flooded in sleepy haze of gold. Fuli-bunched dogwood berries clustered slumberously in heavy masses of red near the water, while flaming maples jostled swarthy manzanita and bunchy cedar clear to the top of the ridge. And the river bubbled and frothed over the black rocks in anything but a doleful mood. Thin smoke curled from the alder thicket. Amery started. A tramp must have left a fire lighted; with woodman's instinct he went toward it.

As he parted the bushes the boy looked up.

"I thought it was 'bout time for you to come." He peered into a bubbling coffee pot. "Any fish?"

"No." Amery's tone was short.

"Bad luck! I hadn't counted on that," he said disappointedly.

Amery strode to the river, and after a time came back with six fish, which he laid on the flat rock.

"That's great!" said the boy.

The fish were cleaned, alternated with bacon on a peeled willow switch and held over the coals, where they frizzled and sent out delicious little whiffs that set Amery's appetite on edge.

"I know the coffee's good. I used to cook at camp, and they always liked my coffee—I put plenty in. You see," Bob—the boy's name was Bob—went on cheerfully, "I had to give up doing big things well, so I've taken to doing little things my best." Amery noticed that the thin hand gripped the rock. "Draw up; I've a thimbleberry plate for you. Don't fish out your sandwich. I strapped a basket on my back and brought everything."

Amery looked at the boy.

"You came all this way on your crutches—for what?"

"I'd have come a deal further for this fun." He threw a burnt piece of toast away. "Here's another try." He dodged the shifting smarting smoke that always blows where the cook listeth to stand. "I'm glad I came. It was a stiffish walk, but a fellow might just as well

be doing something he wants to even if he's got to pay for it. Don't you think so?"

"That's a matter of ethics," Amery growled.

"I'm sure the other boy would have come." Bob's voice lowered.

Amery winced. He could not get used to the touch on the raw.

"Yes, I think he would," he said slowly. Looking up, he saw how deep the bluish circles lay bedded under the boy's eyes; he noticed the fine lines pain had traced on the smooth face. And in a flash the realization came to him that this boy's was the first unpaid service done for him since the long ago.

"I'm a bit more gone than I thought," Bob gave in as he let himself down on the sand by the rock which served for a table. "But it has paid."

"How did you know I would come back?"

"You said you were going to fish the Black Reach—and I knew you'd do what you said."

Amery grew red under his bronzed skin at the thought of the deliberate tramp to Conant's and he was glad that he had been forced back—he would not like those honest eyes to read his evasion.

"We're both kind of set aside in the game, I guess—Dan told me at the house—and we don't take to the bleachers." He made a wry face.

Amery reached out and shook the thin, white hand. And then half ashamed, for emotion was strange to him, he fell to devouring the hot fish.

"I'll take a couple of winks while you fish out the Black Reach. I'll wait till you come back," the boy said sleepily after the meal was finished.

"Sure." The boyish slang slipped before Amery was aware.

"So long—luck to you," Bob called drowsily. And Amery fared down the stream, his heart beating in tune to the first human note in years. He looked back—the boy was curled, fast asleep, before he rounded the bend.

Somehow the birds sang sweeter; at least, he heard their songs—and they sang together. Late flowers bloomed in

his path; and he saw them. He saw how red the saxifrage leaves were turning at the river brim, and leaned over to catch their reflection in the dark waters of the Black Reach. Blessed sunshine spread in golden benediction over the gorge; the somberness of the water was only depth of light. And it came to him in the lonely casting over wide pools that the only cure for grief was human interest, and that the open heart was the only way to healing. The boy had said something like that in his queer jumble of philosophy while he cooked the meal. How could one so young have found out? Amery's face darkened; the boy was old to pain—and pain is a hard schoolmaster.

He watched a gray squirrel with upright brush scamper up a pine while his line trailed in the water; then he looked at his watch, fearing he might be late, and was tempted to stop with a beggarly showing in his basket, but restrained the impulse, for habit is slow to break, and a man will fight to the finish against softening inclination. Most times in life, obstinacy bumps the head of good intention.

Bob was awake, basket strapped to his back, waiting for him. Amery put his hand on the basket.

"That isn't fair. This is my load," the boy protested, and Amery let him carry it.

There were days when Amery went back to the old gruffness, many days when he slipped down to the Black Reach alone. The fixed habit of solitude claimed him, and there were times when the sight of the boy was more than he could stand—that forbidding lump rose to his throat. But at the end of the month when he came to leave, the world had grown bigger, and there was more light in it.

Bob stayed on; he was not much missed at home, and it was November before he came down to the city. He wrote regularly to Amery—boyish, scrappy letters, full of the woods, river and trees, and the man slid into the way of expecting the letters, though he did not always answer them. When he sat at his desk over figures, sometimes

he was not there—he was casting in the swirling waters of the Black Reach, and sniffing the smoke of the fire at the rock—pine wood is sweet in the burning—while Bob cooked the trout with slices of lean bacon between.

It was the hour after dinner, the hour when shadows lie heavy for a man alone in a cumbered big house where things are clean and correct, with never a touch of the disarray of home. Amery gloomed over a well swept hearth, the coffee on the library table growing cold—there's little comfort in the cheering cup when drunk alone. The evening paper was stupid. Somehow, he couldn't throw himself into a mood for the Black Reach tonight. The sordid reality of his life obsessed him; the utter unfriendliness of the world—rather, uncongeniality—weighed upon him. No letter had come that week from the boy.

A pebble struck the window pane—another, sharper. He looked about frowning. The door opened and Bob was ushered in. Tossing his cap on a chair, he stood in the middle of the room looking about.

"It's fine and big here," he said, "big enough for a football field. Did I scare you? I saw you jump—the shade was up. That's my signal when I'm coming. Don't pucker up your forehead, Mr. Amery—you've got to be glad to see me, for I'm here, and I'm coming as often as you'll let me. The man at the door looked scared when I made a rush past him."

Amery pushed a chair forward. He did not speak for a time—that odd choking in the throat would not let him—but the boy did not know that, and stood still, not quite sure of his welcome.

"I'm very glad to see you, Bob," he said stiffly. The man came in to remove the boy's cap.

"Leave it alone, James," Amery said sternly. Somehow, he liked the look of a boy's cap on the chair.

"You've a nice place here." Bob settled into the chair, clasping his hands about his knee. "Books—my! How I'll browse if you're going to let me come!"

Amery reached in his pocket and

handed him a latchkey. "That's yours."

"Why don't you drink your coffee? It'll get cold."

Amery touched a bell. "I will, now that you're here. And, James"—he turned to the man—"wasn't there something sweet for dinner? I didn't notice," he said to Bob. "You'll help me out tonight and the cook will be happy."

"Sure. Dessert is off my bill of fare at home." And they settled comfortably to iced pudding.

"Have you seen the paper tonight?" The boy's voice had a queer little wobbly note. Amery looked up from his second cup of coffee.

"Yes—nothing in it."

"Nothing?" Scorn was in the interrogation. "Why—why the *big* game was today! Five times running we've lost—five times they've licked us. This time our team won. Didn't you know? Today's been hell. You don't mind, do you? I knew you wouldn't go—and I couldn't—though they fixed it for me, and the fellows sent over a bunch to beg me. But, I tell you, it knocks spots out of a fellow when he expects to be *in* the show and he's put off on the bleachers. But we won—and I wasn't there!"

Amery took up the paper—Bob held one corner of the outspread page—and together they read, studying the score, criticizing the sporting editor's comments on each play. Bob explained the fine points, for it had been a long time since the man had followed the game.

"That was my job—fullback." Bob pointed to the page. "And Sneath got it; he's a good kid, a little light, but fast and a good stayer. Sneath fumbled the ball, and Jones—he belongs to the other team—got it, and when they tackled him passed to Hungerford, who went over our line for a touchdown. Oh, why did Sneath drop it?" Bob's eyes were bright. The man insensibly fell in with his excitement. They read each play over again, making diagrams, playing the game on paper until the library clock chimed many strokes.

"I'd no idea it was so late!" Bob exclaimed. "That ass of a doctor puts me

to bed at ten. I'll have to be off. It's good of you to put up with me. I've been in a blue funk all day. They don't understand at home—when they give me everything I want. It takes two who are up against it to understand, sir. I'll sure have to be off."

"I'll go with you." Amery rose.

"No, please don't; I want to keep my independence—as long as I can. Thank you—good night." And the boy was gone.

The next night Amery listened for the pebble to strike the glass. It was later than on the night before, but it came and the latch clicked. The boy slowly thumped in with a smile, his teeth clenched to keep back pain.

"Well?" Amery asked.

"The fellows painted the town. I heard them serpentine down the street—they came over to the city, you know. I heard the yell, the one that makes the blood pound in your head and makes you want to yell like thunder for your college. And you're proud of it—so proud you'd like to shriek it out to the world—you know! I wish I could have seen Sneath. I wish—" The boy flung his arms on the table and buried his head in the crook of his elbow.

Amery watched, but said nothing, pacing up and down the room. The boy's shoulders shook, but there was never a sound. The man laid his hand on the bent head.

"Partner," he said—and it was *how* he said it that made the boy look up with dry, desperate eyes—"partner, don't. Fight it out, boy—fight it out; tackle it hard. You've watched your night in the Garden—it shall not be alone again."

"Thank Heaven it won't be long!" The boy spoke through tightened lips. "I've been round to the doctor's today and made him tell me. It can't last much longer—and I'm glad of it. I think the family would rather have it—that way than this. And my grit is petering out. I can't buck it much longer." The boy was white to the lips.

Amery smiled strangely.

"You're not going, boy. You've got to stay—I need you. You can't go,

Bob—you sha'n't go. Tonight I see great possibilities—you've made me see them. Neither of us has any right to think of self—when there's so much to be done. Our sorrows are such a drop in the ocean—such an infinitesimal drop in the misery of the world. And if it hurts us, think of the hurt of the world. We've no right to slip away from our responsibilities. We've fumbled—both of us, but the game's not lost—thank God we've a chance to buck the line again!"

Bob groped blindly for Amery's hand. The uplift in the man's face he could not understand, but he felt that he was in the presence of a great light, and was willing to follow where it led.

"Isn't it queer," he said, "why we're put here? I've been pretty bitter, thinking why I didn't go when I was knocked out. The pain's bad—I'm nothing but a drag to anybody. Nobody needs me—Sneath took my place—there was no gap. At home there'll be no gap when

I'm gone. You see, your boy was privileged—he was let go quick, not left half a man as I am. I cursed and prayed to go before the game. If I couldn't be in it, I didn't want to be here. You see, Mr. Amery, if I'd been crippled in the big game I would have had my letter—there'd be something to live for—I'd have stood for something." His voice broke. "You say I've done you good—made you see a lot of things I can't see. I don't understand it, but what you say goes. You say you *need* me? Maybe that's why I was left. And a man's a kid to cry if he can be of any use. I don't mind half as much now, if I can be a 'sub' for you in the bigger game—and you'll teach me the rules. The doctor said I was going fast because I didn't have the heart to stay—you've put the heart in me." He looked into Amery's eyes. "I'll try to buck the line squarely. But—Sneath was a duffer. I don't think I'd have fumbled, sir. Why didn't he hang onto the ball?"



LOVE'S RITUAL

By CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

BREATHE me the ancient words when I shall find
 Your spirit mine; if, seeking you, Life wins
 New wonder, with old splendor let us bind
 Our hearts when Love's high sacrament begins.

Exalt my soul with pomp and pageantry,
 Sing the eternal songs all lovers sing;
 Yea, when you come, gold let our vestments be,
 And lamps of silver let us softly swing.

But if at last (hark how I whisper, Love!)
 You from my temple and from me should turn,
 I pray you chant no psalm my grief above,
 Over the body of Pain let no light burn.

Go forth in silence, quiet as a dove,
 Drift, with no sign, from our exultant place;
 We need no *Ite* at the death of Love,
 And none should come to look on Love's white face.

WOMEN OF INVER

By RUTH SAWYER

WOMEN of Inver—'tis straight ye stand,
Full ankle deep in the shiftin' sand,
Your eyes on the sea an' your backs to the land
When the fishin' fleet set sail.
Grim are your eyes wi' the hunger then,
Sayin' "Godspeed" to your fisher men;
In your heart ye pray they may come again,
But your lips are makin' the Wail.

Women of Inver—ye work all day,
Mendin' the nets, your eyes on the bay;
'Tis much ye are thinkin' tho' little ye say,
As ye watch for the tide to turn.
Ye count the hours there's left of light,
Ye know the minute the sea breaks white,
Ye smell the fog as it sweeps into sight,
An' your cheeks wi' the salt sting burn.

Women of Inver—the night is long,
When death winds howl an' the tide runs strong,
An' ye tell your beads in a huddled throng,
While the turf on the hearth glows red.
"O Mary, Mother of God!" ye cry.
"Mothers are we, if our men must die—
Let us spade their graves where the earth is dry,
Make the sea give us back our dead."

Women of Inver—ye'll caoin the day,
The sea gives food, the sea ye must pay;
Ye will learn to work, as ye weep an' pray—
Through the lives ye needs must live.
The boards for the coffins are planed from the mast,
Then wail wi' the wind while the sea runs fast;
No peace will ye know till it claims the last,
An' there's nobody left to give.



THE woman who wants to vote is an economic evil—she shows lack of instinct for husbandry.

BACK

By G. H. STEVENSON

THROUGH the white railings of the ship they could see the oily surface of the tropical sea, whose unbroken ripples merged almost imperceptibly into the gray haze that veiled the West African coast.

Behind them the deck was deserted, save for a foursome of girls and men trying to infuse some energy into a game of deck quoits.

The little woman in white moved restlessly in her chair.

"How awful it is!" she said with a backward glance at the players. "How can they play in heat like this?"

"Doesn't it make you dream of green lawns and strawberries?" the other woman said laughingly, as she dangled a trinket before the pale face of the languid baby in her lap.

"It makes me long for them," the other answered. She stretched out her arms for the child. "How good he has been with you! Come back to mummy, now, darling; you are the only comfort she has."

The other, as she yielded the child, looked quizzical. Mrs. Baring answered the look. "At present, anyway. How I loathe the thought of Africa, and how I love England!"

"And English winters?"

"And English winters." She bent forward, speaking eagerly. "Why, the most delicious thing in the world is the gathering round the fire between tea and dinner in an English country house. Can't you see the dear old drawing-room, the drawn curtains, the glow of the leaping fire on the faces, the—the—" Something fell upon the baby's hand and glistened there.

Mrs. Rawson looked surprised and

concerned. "Why, Lil," she said, "are you really fretting as much as that?"

Little Mrs. Baring dashed away her tears impetuously.

"Of course, I am delighted when I think I shall see Mac again. But it's the life, Muriel—the life is ghastly!"

"That's eight for us, Miss Steen," called out one of the quoit players. "Very well played, indeed."

Mrs. Baring shot a glance sideways at the victorious Miss Steen—a thin, hard-featured spinster, whose youth had been withered betimes by the remorseless African sun—and shrugged her shoulders.

"That's the only sort of person I see, if I ever see a white face—which is rarely. And I do like a decent woman so much," she ended plaintively.

"But are you so lonely?"

"Lonely! Our nearest neighbors live on a farm twenty miles away—they are the Steen sort of people. Once a month they come and see me, and occasionally I go and see them. Beyond that there is nobody at all. Do you know"—she edged her chair closer—"before baby came, when I couldn't ride and Mac used to be away all day going over the farm, I used to think sometimes I should go mad, the silence and the loneliness were so awful."

"But you were not well, you know," the other said soothingly.

"I know that, but even when one is well it's terrible. Heaven knows I try and make the best of it. I look after my house, I can tell you. And I sew and I cook—Mac says I am rather a good cook—and once I tried to make a garden, only it was such hard work

getting the water—and then the locusts ate everything up.”

The baby gurgled in response—perhaps to the low laughter from the neighboring chair.

Little Mrs. Baring shook her head.

“Oh, it’s all very well for you to laugh. You are only going to *visit* Africa; you are not doomed to stay there. You know you are looking forward to Ascot in June and the Regatta in July and Scotland in August, and all sorts of nice things besides. While I—well, I suppose we shall have to stick to the veldt, unless Mac’s uncle dies, and that’s unlikely.”

“Does he dislike it, too?”

“I don’t know. He never grumbles except when he particularly wants a bath and there’s no water, or the meat goes bad on its way from the town and we can only raise bread and milk for dinner. I made up my mind we should have a good dinner on his birthday, so I bought a sheep out of a flock that was passing. What do you think? The creature died only the day before, and of course we couldn’t touch it. But Mac just jogs on,” concluded Mrs. Baring, looking away forward at the sky that was darkening ahead. “If he would swear sometimes like other men, I’d be thankful.”

“Isn’t he like other men?”

“Mac? No, he’s a saint. I say, we are running into a storm, aren’t we? Mr. Dane”—to a man, who was strolling toward them—“would you mind looking round for my nurse, please?”

He went obediently. Every man did obediently what Mrs. Baring asked him. She remained sitting, her blue eyes still gazing somberly at the darkening sky above her head; it caught the oily waters of the tropic sea and curled them into a restless multitude of tiny waves.

The nurse came and Mrs. Baring put the baby in her arms. She turned to Mrs. Rawson, and the two by tacit consent moved along the deck.

“‘Ware the rain, ladies!” called the quartermaster, who was hurriedly collecting the chairs; and Mrs. Baring called back to him: “We are going to watch it; I like it.”

The rain came while she spoke, pelt-ing like hail against the canvas. Mrs. Baring gathered her skirts round her, and standing on the edge of dry plank-ing, with a smile upon her face watched it scud past her and run into the scuppers.

In ten minutes it was over, and the quartermaster advanced with pail and broom to swab the dripping planks; she turned regretfully away. “I wonder,” she said to her companion, “when I shall see rain—real rain—again?”

“The last dinner.” Mrs. Baring, with her fork on an entrée, glanced about her comprehensively.

In her simple blouse and veteran skirt, she made the one harmonious note in a strangely incongruous gathering. Opposite her sat a lady in an elaborate bridge coat; an Australian *en grande toilette* and diamonds was lisping little nothings about the voyage and the weather into the ears of the captain; one of the men had donned a dress suit; another wore a dinner jacket over khaki trousers; Mrs. Rawson, in an old black evening frock, looked as if she missed her stiff white collar.

“They are giving us an extra good meal tonight,” she said in answer to Mrs. Baring’s exclamation. “This curry is excellent.”

“It is so delightful to think that perhaps Mac will be having a good dinner as well,” said little Mrs. Baring. “That is if he has got to Cape Town. I hope, poor dear, he won’t be silly and sit on the quay all night.”

“Do you think it probable?”

“Oh, quite. You don’t know Mac. He will be so excited at the thought of seeing us.”

The captain, bored by the Australian, called down the table: “Well, Mrs. Baring, what do you think your husband will say to the baby tomorrow?”

She answered readily, a pretty flush rising to the roots of her fair hair. “As long as he doesn’t say, ‘How small!’ or ‘How ugly!’ I don’t care what it is.”

There was a general protest, for the

Baring baby was a favorite on board, and under its cover Mrs. Baring whispered to Mrs. Rawson: "Come to my cabin and see our going-ashore clothes."

"Now, don't you think I shall look very nice?" said Mrs. Baring, as she switched on the electric light. "My white linen frock and this brand new red chapeau that mamma brought me from Paris. But I am so puzzled about baby. Do you think Mac would like him best in a silk frock or a lawn one?"

There was an odd look between tears and laughter in the gray eyes of the other woman, as she glanced from the piquant excited face to the child sleeping soundlessly in the berth.

"I don't know," she said with a break in her voice, "that Mac will mind what he wears as long as he's there."

"Dear old Mac!" Some deeper emotion threw its shadow over the pretty face, that was nearly inane, and she gripped the elder woman suddenly by both arms.

"I have grumbled to you a lot about the life out there, haven't I? Of course, it's worse for a woman than for a man, I think, although poor Mac hasn't a bed of roses, either. And it was terrible when I wasn't well before I went home and I had all those long lonely hours on the stoop. But I am going to try and bear it better—I am, really. And now baby's here, it will make all the difference in the world."

The other woman kissed her on both cheeks.

"Good night, and good-bye," she said softly. "I think Mac deserves it."

The next day at a distance she watched with a careful curiosity a tall, lean Englishman, with a little woman in white at his side and a nurse and a baby, drive away in a rickety barouche from the Cape Town docks.

II

THE brown African veldt lay bare and scorched beneath the pitiless fire of the December sun.

In almost the midst of the plain, and

stationed where it seemed to crave the shadow of the brown *kopje* that stood mercilessly aloof behind it, was a small white house, whose blinking quietude seemed to intensify the all-surrounding silences.

Presently a woman came out upon the stoop, where she made a black speck against the background of whiteness, and stood looking out over the brown and desolate expanse to the chain of blue hills, that checked the horizon like the fortifications of a prison.

The woman was little Mrs. Baring, still wearing mourning—the mourning that in Africa always looks so dusty and oppressive—for the little child, that was to have made "all the difference," and which had died four months ago.

A few minutes later a horse and rider came into sight, and Baring, as he rounded the house on his way to the kraal, raised his gray felt hat to his wife with the courtesy that in him was inherent. If she smiled back at him it was a sorry attempt, that relieved only for a moment the pathetic blankness of her face.

When he came to the stoop she was still in the same listless attitude, looking out toward the great blue mountains, that, full of mystery and remoteness, seemed to sink the drama of their lives, nay, the drama of all life, into an intolerable pettiness.

He kissed her and she received his caress impassively, though a moment later she turned toward him.

"Are you not tired?"

"Tired? I'm dead tired"—the tone was almost as hopeless as her own; "I've had to slaughter more goats. Lil, it's awful!"

"I don't see why you should fret," she said slowly. "The drought is not your fault. And certainly you can't make the rain come if it won't."

"By Jove, that's true."

"You had better have something to drink—hadn't you?" she said again in the same unemotional tone. "You must be very thirsty."

He made a gesture with his hands. "No, I can't drink. The thought of those poor suffering beasts haunts me.

Gad, I think sometimes cruelty's the pivot the world turns on—damned relentless cruelty from man to man, from man to beast, from beast to beast, and from God to us all!"

"You can't help it," she repeated. As she turned again to the veldt he came to her side.

"I'm afraid this puts a stop to your going home, Lil. If I go on losing animals like this I shall be crippled for some time."

"I don't mind," she said quietly; "it would make no difference."

Over the veldt a mysterious change had come. The sun was setting, and to the fierce glare of the day had succeeded a tender radiance of coloring that was indescribably delicate and lovely.

Baring laid his hand on his wife's where it rested on the low mud wall, and they stood in silence—the woman thinking of her dead child and the man of his dying flocks—while the wondrous panorama of an African sunset faded into the starlit purity and majestic calm of an African night.

"Poor old girl!" the man said then. "Life has been pretty rough on us two of late, hasn't it?"

She caught his hand, raised it to her lips and kissed it. "You are too good," she said impetuously. "You think of me and pity me, and I don't seem as if I cared a rap for anything any more. If all your goats had to be killed tomorrow I shouldn't care."

"Oh, yes, you would," he said soothingly; "you misjudge yourself."

From the lighted dining room the native servant came to tell them that supper was ready.

"By the way, Lil," said Baring, as with one hand he helped the soup and with the other by an action that had become almost automatic warded off the flies, "young Mowbray's awfully anxious to come out to us for a bit. Shall we have him?"

"I don't mind," she said; and then the conversation languished until suddenly she held up her hand.

"Listen!" she said eagerly. "Isn't that a wind? I think I hear the water wheel."

"It's the rain at last," said Baring. "Thank God!"

Young Mowbray came, and in a very short time had fallen into his niche in the little house. To both Baring and his wife the addition of a third person had been a certain relief; and Mowbray was so young, so untouched by care, that almost inevitably their somber lives had gained in lightness from his presence.

At first Mrs. Baring had ignored him. She had gone her own way, the silent, mechanical round she had made for herself since her baby's death, leaving her husband and his visitor to one another. Her indifference, the indifference of a still pretty and youthful woman, had piqued Mowbray; then it had stirred his mettle. Mrs. Baring's friendship he determined to have whether she would or no.

And as the weeks of his stay lengthened into a month and the month into three, he attained his design and more.

Almost unconsciously Lilian Baring found her reserve melting before the warmth of Mowbray's boyish admiration, his good spirits and the hundred and one little services he was always at her beck to render. It was he who made her another garden, who rode to the kloof to find her ferns, who was always ready to inspan and drive into the village for supplies or papers or a new novel from the subscription library. So it went on until Mowbray found himself hopelessly in love, and Mrs. Baring, though dispassionate still, had ceased to ignore him. Sometimes she would wish rebelliously that he would go and leave them to their old solitude; and once, when one evening at dinner Mowbray had suggested it was time he brought his visit to a close and Baring had pressed him to stay, she had attacked her husband petulantly afterward.

"Why on earth did you say that? Why couldn't you let him go?"

"But you can see he doesn't really want to go," Mac had answered innocently. "Besides, his being here seems

to have done you good. You have been a lot brighter lately."

The next day she had tried to resume her old restraint, to enwrap herself once more in her melancholy remembrance of the child; but somehow in spite of herself their intimacy slipped back to its old footing, to the long rides before breakfast over the veldt, to the *tête-à-tête* on the stoop after dinner, while Mac busied himself with accounts or wage paying or stock, to the little familiar demands upon his service, which daily knitted more securely the bond of their companionship.

III

MOWBRAY and Mrs. Baring were sitting together after luncheon. In the west the sky was already rosy with the sunset, and a fresher air stirred the light curls of Mrs. Baring's well dressed head. She stretched out her arms lazily.

"What a glorious afternoon! What a pity Mac won't let us ride! Do you think there is really danger, or is it just Mac's imagination? The people here seem quiet enough."

Mowbray summoned attention to her words with a visible effort. His whole thought had been concentrated on the little white figure in the basket chair, on the curve of the arm behind the fair head, the poise of her feet as they swung lazily one across the other.

"I don't know," he said absently. "But Mac ought—he knows the natives pretty well. If there were a row it might be a rummy go for us, don't you think?"

"Oh, don't jest about it," said Mrs. Baring with a shudder. "If there are two things I'm afraid of in this world, it's natives and snakes."

Mowbray laughed, but the note of fear in her voice was no affectation.

"Ever since we've been in this awful place the thought of a native rising has haunted me. Look how lonely it is"—she stretched an expressive hand toward the silent expanse of the veldt, brown no longer, but opal-tinted and almost spiritual in its heaven-lent beauty. "What could we do? Who could help us?"

"Oh, I don't think it is as bad as that," said Mowbray soothingly, then with all his passion for her vibrating in his voice: "Anyway, whatever happens, they sha'n't touch you as long as I am here."

"Oh," she said lightly, "don't try and usurp my husband's place. He will protect me."

The impending danger—the real danger Mowbray knew there was—made him reckless.

"Lilian, you know—" he began hoarsely. The temptation of her teasing face was provocative. He drew it to his lips and kissed her passionately.

"If they want to hurt you, darling," he said again, "by God, they'll have their work cut out!"

She was about to answer, when a man's hurried step across the oilclothed floor of the dining room made them both turn round, and Baring came toward them.

"Mac!" his wife exclaimed. "How pale you are! What has happened?"

She rose, laying her hand upon his shoulders; and for a moment he stood looking down into her face with an intenseness at once so cognizant and so inscrutable that she trembled.

Then he removed her hands himself, glancing at her white dress.

"I want you to go away now, Lil, and change into the darkest thing you have—something you can ride in."

"Why?" she said hoarsely, and the turquoise light threw a green reflection over her face full of a terrible and sickening terror.

"Because you have a long, hard ride before you, and you must start at once. Mowbray"—for one scarcely perceptible moment he paused, and his stern gaze stayed itself on the young man—"Mowbray has got to get you into the village before daybreak tomorrow."

"By Jove! Then it's true?" exclaimed Mowbray.

"Yes, it's true," the other said drily. "They will attack this house tonight."

"But you?" gasped Lilian. Before the urgency of the moment that recent passage with Mowbray had shrunk into

mere vulgar flimsiness; she had all but forgotten it.

"I?" said Baring. "Oh, I shall be all right. I have one or two things to do, and then I'll follow you." He took her hand. "Come, buck up, Lil; let me help you into your things."

Half dazed, she let him guide her across the dining room to their bedroom.

"I am so frightened," she said between her chattering teeth; and leaving her sitting helplessly on the bed, he went for whiskey, which he made her drink. Some calmness it lent her, for she was able then, though mechanically, to take off her white frock and replace it with the habit he handed her out of the wardrobe.

"But—you?" she repeated, as he led her down the steps. Mowbray was already there, mounted and leading her own gray by the bridle. Mac lifted her into the saddle. "Oh, I shall be all right. I'll soon be after you."

He tightened her stirrup leather and put the reins in her hands. Then she bent down and kissed him, and the cold of his lips reminded her of the icy face of her dead child. She tried to speak to him again, but the mare, fresh from two days' rest, had already plunged forward.

They rode straight for the west, where one streak of lurid crimson still cleft the violet sky. Mrs. Baring, her ears strained to catch the thud of following horse hoofs, followed blindly where Mowbray led her. Then as her self-possession came slowly back, and Mac did not come, the conviction gripped her—sickening and overwhelming in the sudden chasm it revealed—that Mac had seen Mowbray kiss her and would not follow them.

She reined in her horse.

"What is it?" said Mowbray hoarsely; then, ashamed of the funk in his voice, he added with a forced laugh: "I thought you saw something."

"I am going back," said Mrs. Baring.

"Good God, Lilian, no! You must not!" He seized her bridle.

"Let go, please," she said distinctly and in a voice that was metallic in its cold aloofness.

"I don't wish you to accompany me. I am going back"—she pointed with her riding whip—"to him."

Mowbray's eyes followed the crop. The veldt had become in the darkness a vague mysterious land full of hummocky shapes and weird things, and among them the little house had already lost its identity.

"Lilian, child, dearest, you cannot do it. You must not. Think of the danger for you—for both of us!"

"I don't wish you to come," she repeated coldly. "I forbid you to come."

Her whip fell with no uncertain force across his knuckles; he let go, and spurring her horse she was away at a gallop. Mowbray, swearing vigorously, stared blankly after her, and even as he looked she and her horse became one with the shadows of the mysterious land.

He waited irresolutely. There was a rustle and stir in the spruit close at hand; something whizzed toward him, and the next moment a naked Kaffir had leaped to catch the trailing bridle of a riderless horse.

Lilian Baring's mare, as if she scented something of the horrors of that night, covered magnificently the three-mile stretch between her and her stable, only pulling up when she began to stumble on the loose stones that were thickly strewn round the little house.

Mrs. Baring threw the bridle loose and clambered down. The house was all in darkness. She ran up the steps and tried the dining room door. It was locked; so were those of the bedrooms. She came back to the dining room door and called through the keyhole: "Mac! Mac!"

The door was flung open and her husband's hand drew her in.

"Good God, Lilian! I was hoping you were safe! Were you attacked—or what?"

She shook her head. "I have come back," she said simply, "that's all."

A candle burned upon the table carefully shaded, and beside it lay two pistols primed and cocked; that was all she saw before she turned again to her husband's face. "Why did you not come with us?" she said almost harshly.

He met her eyes squarely. "Because I thought you and Mowbray should have your chance."

"Mac—you didn't think—" Her voice failed her.

Baring looked at her gravely but without sternness. "I saw you seemed happier with him, happier since you have been—since our child died. I drew my own conclusions."

Mrs. Baring wrung her hands. "I know I have been a fool," she said, "but if I told you it was not true—would you believe me?"

A sound of stealthy footsteps on the stoop checked his answer. Mrs. Baring in her agitation had not heard, but she hung in anguish on his hesitation. He held out his arms, and she came to their shelter with a sob of relief.

"I do believe you now," he said quietly, and she answered him through a gush of tears.

"Oh, Mac, forgive me. I have been wicked and selfish ever since baby died. But I will try now—I will try."

He kissed away the words that came brokenly over her lips. Again the

sound came, the pad of bare feet, the soft trying of the locked door. Mrs. Baring heard it and looked up into her husband's face with starting eyes.

"Mac," she said hoarsely, "can't we get away?"

Baring shook his head. "The scent's too hot, Lil. Your mare stumbling over the stones gave the signal, though we could not have escaped much longer, anyway." He pointed mutely at the pistols. "Oh, my darling, are you brave enough?"

She nestled closer to him. "Tell me," she said in a low, insistent whisper, "that you forgive me everything, and I shall not be frightened."

The feet outside had increased in number; the voices grew louder; a stone crashed through the window.

Mrs. Baring took the pistols from the table and thrust one into her husband's hand. "Now," she said; "don't let them find us alive."

She held up her face for his last kiss, and repeated as a child might:

"I am—not frightened—now!"



GIANTS

By THEODOSIA GARRISON

I WALKED with giants once upon the height,
For that one look you gave me one May night.

Comrade of theirs was I, as bold as strong,
For that one note I dreamed into your song.

By none could I be worsted or o'erthrown,
Feeling your hands a moment in my own.

Now must I face my giants one by one,
I, who but dreamed a dream and wake alone;
Love, Joy and High Ambition and Delight,
What though I battle through the livelong night,
Seeing that Love must slay me ere 'tis done!

NEW LIGHT ON OLD PROVERBS

By M. C. MORSE

"HE that walketh uprightly walketh surely."
He surely does—it is the other fellow who rides.

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing."
If it were only one of the good things you could "pass along"!

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."
Somehow, a name that is good on a cheque seems to be good enough for most people.

"The rich and the poor meet together."
But only at large functions.

"Forsake the foolish and live."
If it weren't for the foolish it would be hard to make a living.

"A hoary head is a crown of glory."
There would be more applicants for that crown if it were Titian.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath."
In most cases it makes you madder than ever.

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child."
What a lot of grown-up children there are!



IN CUPID'S FAMILY

By REX T. STOUT

THAT Pity is akin to Love
Has many a confirmation;
But if it be a kin at all,
'Tis but a Poor Relation.

A SECOND CHANCE

By VIOLA BURHANS

"I REGRET to say, Mrs. Havencourt, that your husband has little chance of recovery. In fact—"

The physician paused. It had been his boast that during the twenty years of his practice he had never refused to state to a household the exact condition of a patient within it. He had no sympathy with the professional urbanity of medical men which allowed them to prate of hope so long as life lasted. When hope itself went, Dr. Marsten did not fill up the gap with rhetoric. While he clung with the next one to the proverbial last straws of a case, and drew upon them with his widely known professional skill in the hope of snatching a patient from the current that set toward the unknown river, at the same time, when these straws failed, he made no further pretense of being able to save.

It was so now. His young patient, Keene Havencourt, was fairly beyond his reach, and consciously, taciturnly, approaching his river. Knowing this, Dr. Marsten had sought out Mrs. Havencourt with the intention of telling her the blunt, unpleasant truth.

Just how unpleasant Eleanor Havencourt would find this truth, the physician was not prepared to say, nor scarcely to speculate upon. Dr. Marsten was a blunt, busy man, inclined to tush-tush over the emotional ups and downs of young married people and to deprecate such extrinsic concomitants as words and tears. More than any other one thing he minded his business—and twenty years of close application to that difficult task had given him plenty of business to mind; so that now he could not

be accused of harboring any of that probing curiosity which might have led him to use his profession as he did his stethoscope—to sound the Havencourt heart for disclosures concerning their intimate or domestic life.

The Havencourts—if the opinion of those who swarm like flies about the matrimonial molasses cruets, watching to see if it gets upset, counts for anything—belonged to that much talked-of class of people who "don't get along well together." Just what that phrase may have meant in its relation to them, and whether, as the honey jar watchers said, there was enough in Keene's tagging about after the flat heels of Marian Teller to warrant its use, Dr. Marsten neither knew nor cared.

Even had he been on the lookout, next to nothing that might have committed him to an opinion on the matter could have been judged either from Eleanor's or from Keene's attitude since the latter's three weeks' illness. Mrs. Havencourt seldom appeared in the sick room, asked few questions, and showed neither marked attention, nor evidenced its lack, in her attitude toward her husband.

Still less, if possible, was to have been judged from Havencourt's attitude. From the hospital, where he had been sent after the accident, he had been taken to his home on Seventy-second Street, a limp, inert but conscious mass, slow-pulsed, pallid-faced and resentful—resentful that the monster Dallingham car, which had previously obeyed him like a kitten, whose dull chugging and intimate pulsing he had loved, should suddenly have twisted itself into a devil and all but killed him outright; resent-

ful, too, that the vague phrase, "internal injuries," which the physicians had agreed covered his case, stopped just short of holding any technical meaning for him.

Its very indefiniteness angered him. It was so subtly elastic, stretching to cover anything from a scratch to a vital wound, and yet so devilishly comprehensive. If only his injury had been something that he might lay hold of, and know the best or worst of at once—for instance, a broken leg or a rib!

But to lie like that, a week at the hospital and two weeks at his home, where, under protest, he had insisted upon being taken. Just to lie watching the things in the room, and the nurse walking about soft shod, carrying bottles and bandages or setting down bowls of steaming liquids; unable to shut his nostrils to the smell of carbolic, and taking his medicine patiently or indifferently, according to its kind; to be aware at times of strange shooting or crawling pains throughout his body, pains that bewildered and frightened him because he couldn't quite locate them or know how deadly the work was that they were doing—all this he found as nearly unbearable as bearable torment could be.

At the end of a third week spent in this way Dr. Marsten told him bluntly his condition. He had no mealy mouth methods.

"Your case is a peculiar one, and it's beating us," he said. "You've probably about two weeks to live, with strong possibilities of going off at any time in the interim. But don't get excited about it; keep your tension low. A low tension, Havencourt! If the drug stores kept that, octogenarians would be as plenty as mushrooms."

Keene's mind underwent a panic, but he lay motionless.

The doctor went out, having left a few platitudes but no powders.

Then Havencourt knew that the tantalizing phrase, "internal injuries," meant, in its relation to him, something more devilish and subtle even than he had at first supposed. It meant—death.

His fingers fumbled with a corner of

the counterpane as he repeated the word. Death! That to him was the ultimate subtlety, the dreaded going down into dust—or into something—or nothing.

He lay inertly, looking consciously ahead of him and trying to think in a connected strain. The nurse came and changed his position, and gave him a reddish-colored liquid which he swallowed mechanically.

Death!

"Tomorrow? Why, tomorrow I may be

"Myself with yesterday's seven thousand years."

The lines came to him unconsciously, their truth consciously. Tomorrow he, Keene Havencourt, might be with "yesterday's seven thousand years." A coldness went over him; and then a crawling pain that twisted stubbornly about within him, and finally, unnoticed, died a sluggish death. Havencourt's thoughts were busy with the greater mystery. Death was on its way to the temple of his body, and he could not open the gates in welcome. Every entrance of his being seemed closed.

Not that Havencourt feared death in itself; rather, he passionately loved life. College, some work of the kind that he had liked; health which would have advertised a food coffee, supposing he took one; muscles and wind that had won him the 440-yard race for the champion plate of the English-Austrian Athletic Union; an income which so far had developed no cardiac symptoms of going off suddenly, and a family back of him that babbled about being descended from as blue-blooded a bunch of English soldiery and marines as ever flourished a pike or bespattered a cutlass with blood—all these for thirty years had played their part in making his life the joy that it had been to him.

To give them up now—all those small nameable details that had brought him happiness! And the lure, the call of the world, sometimes barely whispering, sometimes singing to him, but always catching his ear with its "Come!" To jog around picking out its finest spots, not all of them on the map nor reached by the trains. Some of them hidden—

oh, God, how they were hidden! Miles from nowhere, sweet with pine and pitch and lake-blown odors, inhabited by shy, wild creatures that his gun sometimes brought down and sometimes spared. Night, with its close sky a blotch of stars seeming to huddle just above the lumpy, blackish peaks, nights lighted mostly by his camp fire, Jimmy Dorn's and his. Days of swimming and cross-country tramps, sweating, sprinting, story telling tramps with Dorn, the sun on their bared chests, and creek or swamp mud on their shoes.

Havencourt moved restlessly, his whole being hungering for another of those summers. The trout fishing. What big, speckled beauties they had caught and cooked! One little slit at each helpless throat, a twist of the cleaner's wrist, and the fish were ready for the frying pan. Then their futile spit and sizzle as the fire touched them, and the curl of the white meat just before they sent out that appetizing smell. That smell—coming generally at the end of the day when they had made ready their supper. He saw Dorn's face leaning over the fish wizened a little by the trickery of the firelight playing over it, his black hair yet wet from his swim and his muddy-colored clothes seeming to shine in that witchlike yellowish light. And the way Dorn invariably burnt his mouth at the first taste of the fish. Jimmy was such a pig that he could never wait for their supper to cool. What a nice, comfortable, yes, *beautiful*, pig Dorn was. Havencourt groaned. And what times they two had had—keeping together like two dogs, sleeping in the same spots at night, and trekking their way over the same trails during the day.

Dr. Marsten came in at noon.

"Come, come!" he said heartily, taking in the look of dejection on his patient's face. "Can't you take a fighting chance—even if I won't give you one? Too low a tension *now*, I should say! Buck up, sir, buck up!"

"That's what Dorn says," Keene commented half to himself.

"Then he's a good kind to have around—a good kind," the physician

added, beginning to write out a prescription.

"I'm thinking of sending for him."

"Well—maybe you'd better. It wouldn't do any harm."

"Is there—any hurry, Doctor?"

"There's always hurry—if a thing has to be done. People who fool away time are taking magnificent chances. 'Do it now' will be in the decalogue fifty years from today."

After he had gone, Havencourt lay thinking, chiefly about Dorn. He wondered where he was. They had drifted apart since his marriage to Eleanor. That summer he had asked Jimmy up to the Adirondacks to spend the season there with Eleanor and him, but Dorn had refused to come—curtly, vaguely refused; and Havencourt, wrapped up then in his honeymoon happiness, had not troubled to find out why. Now he thought of him again, as if in some subtle way Dorn was connected with the death that was coming to him. He wondered what Jimmy would say if he knew—and if his "Buck up, old man!" would this time have something more in it than the carelessness of the platitude.

Buck up—and against death! Havencourt groaned again. The monstrous unfairness of it struck him full in the face, took him off his feet and threw him mentally into a limp, suffering heap. His face twisted grayly and his mouth trembled. His illness had made him weak. The "buck up" quality upon which he had always prided himself had left him, and he lay wistfully resentful, his eyes a blur of tears and his thoughts hanging affectionately about Dorn.

Dorn was probably tramping this minute—it was August—in some fragrant, cone-strewn wood, careless of the sparks from his pipe, muddy, unkempt, happy. He would have Eleanor send for him. She knew where he was. Dorn would come, anyhow—after he was gone. Why not before? Yes, he must come now; they must have another talk, another pipe together. He didn't feel like a pipe then, but he thought that he would as soon as Dorn came. Confound it! Where was Jimmy, anyhow! Why hadn't he been notified as soon as the

accident had happened? Surely, if he had known that Havencourt was about ready to make his long trip, he would have caught the first train from Kalamazoo or Kamchatka—from the ends of the earth—and have come to him.

Why hadn't he left an address? Havencourt underwent a wrathful moment in which he called Dorn a born tramp, and berated him for having no respectable business with telephone or cable connections. And yet—Eleanor knew where he was. He had only to speak to Eleanor about Dorn.

Yet Havencourt did not immediately send for Eleanor. With the thought of her had come the connected one of Marian Teller—as it had seldom failed to do for the past year.

Marian would miss him. Marian had given him comradeship. She had exchanged evenly with him, laugh for laugh and word for word. Her trenchant, talkative brightness never failed to put him in fettle. He had first met her while blazing a trail through the forest between Rockmount and Waverly. That was four years ago, and two years before his marriage to Eleanor. Her party of six had made the background she needed, and from their colorless fusion Marian had stood out, as attractively long-limbed as she was short-skirted, guiltless of gloves or dinner dress for six weeks straight, and tanned the color of a potato skin.

From the first she had tramped Keene's miles with him, never breathless when they took their peaks, never soggly soaked in perspiration or untidy looking from escaping hair. She shot the things he did, told the same kind of funny, clean stories, canoed and swam and trapped with him, and laid out her days to match his.

When Havencourt asked her to marry him, she had said no—with an emphasis upon the word. Keene was entertaining enough in a summer camp, but she didn't want him in town with her in the winter, bossing her around in some house and telling her what a fright she looked in a long skirt. It took plenty of time, and some tact, to swing him around to her viewpoint. But at the

end of a second summer she was rewarded, and Havencourt's ardor for Marian as his wife went off into his first ardor for her as his friend.

And what friends they were! They began all over again. They tramped and fished together, punted on lakes and rivers, and nearly killed themselves capturing a couple of black bear cubs. They sat perilously on the edges of cliffs—and talked. A thread of understanding seemed to hold them, slenderly perhaps, but perfectly together.

And then Eleanor had come, Eleanor tagged by an argumentative father, who, as a human Periodical of Protest, made the *Philistine* look like a baby food; by a serene-faced mother who evidently had robbed herself of her early charms so that Eleanor might lack nothing in that line—and judging from the result, the breaking of the eighth commandment had never served to a better purpose; and by some others, friends, who had rented the camp next to Havencourt's and Dorn's for the season.

From the first, the coming of Eleanor had made a tremendous difference to Havencourt. And no wonder—for it was probable that in twenty years' time few women had managed to get together so many "endearing young charms" as had Eleanor Carter. At night on its pedestrians Broadway flashes its electric eyes open and shut in enticing winks. Imagine the dazzle of a million more of these eyes scattered about this great shop and office skyline, all winking like mad, and constantly sending out their gorgeous, alluring flashes. Havencourt imagined that the effect would be somewhat like that which he experienced when Eleanor marshaled out her charms and left him exposed to their allurements. In the latter case he always felt a little bewildered—and a little mad for her. It was just as if she had swept him off his feet, lifted him a little above the earth—where she was—and dropped him again with the command to look up and worship.

He did that promptly enough—even before she had disposed of poor Jimmy. From "poor Jimmy" himself Haven-

court got the whole story. Eleanor Carter and Dorn had been co-eds, and from sharing his vest pocket edition of "trots" with her, Dorn had gradually worked around to the point where he had been mad to share everything else with her, including himself. But Miss Carter had called a sharp halt to this kind of division. She had been nice about it, too. Beginning with the "I never dreamed that you cared like *that*," she had gone on amiably down to the best-friend - to - him - that - he -had-ever-had part, which is the grand finale of every girl's rejection of a first proposal. Certainly a nice way of throwing over poor Jimmy—even Havencourt could see that, although Dorn never could—with none of the "this is so sudden" stops pulled out to make the solemnity of the music ridiculous. So Keene had reflected at the time.

Then *he* had stepped in—the beach being deserted, the Dorn craft having gone into drydock for repairs, and incidentally for the rest of the season, so Keene hoped—he, Havencourt, Junior, quite pale with purpose, savagely hasty and as determined as a bill collector. And he had made love to Eleanor's five dazed senses in a tremendous way, a way which must have been the combination, for it had unlocked Miss Carter's heart and allowed him to possess himself of its treasures.

Havencourt reckoned with it all again that afternoon, lying reminiscent, and little at peace, while he waited—waited not for death, but for life. He waited for Eleanor. Surely she would come—but he would not send for her.

A clock in another room struck five. Havencourt's face looked strained as he counted the chimes. It had been their bridal hour—their betrothal hour, too, from the memory of which Eleanor herself had set their wedding time.

She had loved him then. He would be a fool to doubt that. They had had their dream on the heights, their own personal, marvel sweet, intimate dream. How had they managed to come down into the valley, hands and lips apart, warily, wearily polite to each other—and little more?

Ah, he knew. But it seemed such a little matter to have made such a fiendish mess of everything. Just the coming of Marian at the unpsychological moment, at that delicate period of adjustment between two young people when they should be left alone. Miss Teller had "walked in on them," and proceeding at once to exercise the subtle right of "an old friend," had taken possession of both Keene and Eleanor during the hot season, spent, as was their habit, in the mountains.

It was the old story. Eleanor could not talk of the things that Marian could, nor tramp her miles, nor bait her hooks, nor tan her becoming brown. She couldn't feel right in a shirtwaist nor do her hair always in one way.

Havencourt was conscious of this—from a man's viewpoint. But he would not be held to account for walking and talking with Marian, since that was all it amounted to. He deprecated the lack of fairness, as he thought, in Eleanor's disposition, which prevented her from seeing it in this light. He set out to show her by his aloofness that she should have been broad-minded and trusted him. Yet during the past year not a word on the matter had passed the lips of either.

Why hadn't she come to him? But he remembered, bitterly now, that he had no more invited her attack than he had one of whooping cough. Pride on both sides had shut their mouths tighter than plasters could have done. He felt that there was nothing to explain, she that nothing *could* be explained. So coldness had grown between them.

Then Dorn had come to town, four months ago, his trip timed or untimed. Havencourt did not know which, by his own absence. Eleanor had mentioned it to him in one of her scanty letters, the incident seeming to occupy an "among those present" place with the other news items that she had written him. But when Havencourt had returned a month later—Dorn having left at some time during the interim—he fancied that he detected a change in Eleanor. She was brighter, colder, thinner.

Lying now on his back in bed, he reproached himself for the brute that he had been to her. He had driven her to Dorn, the poor little woman! Not bodily, for Havencourt knew that his trust in her was well founded, and that she was no more capable of flouting it than she was of drinking cocktails. But he had driven her at last to love Dorn. It was the song of love welling within her that had brightened her face, and thinned her, too, so long as he, Havencourt, stood with the flaming sword of his bodily presence in the way of her happiness.

Well—that sword would not be turned against her much longer. She could come back into her Eden—where once he had been with her. She could come back with Dorn. Dorn would be wild about taking her there, and he believed in his soul that he would know how to keep her there. Jimmy wouldn't miff as he had. Havencourt even smiled at the delicate irony of it all. To be put in a garden of Eden with the sweetest woman in the world—and then to miff.

He moved restlessly. The greatest thing that a man could be given, he thought bitterly, would be—a second chance. And then a luminous expression came about his mouth and eyes. That should be his legacy to Eleanor—a second chance. She would return into her garden. But he would go out—and not come back.

The door of his room opened quietly. Keene, thinking of the nurse, turned impatiently. His eyes encountered those of Eleanor, who was approaching the bed.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" she inquired, standing before the footboard.

He looked up in surprise. The question was unusual for Eleanor. Havencourt was vaguely conscious that it marked her recognition of the beginning of the end. It was as if, prompted either by remorse or by a sense of duty, she would tender him some last service. He had a whimsical sense that he might have felt that same way toward his Dallingham car; that, even when the monster lay in pieces about him, he

might have been possessed with a desire to patch up its twisted rods and to put together again the clicking, cushiony, intimate machine that he had loved: and although he knew it to be completely despoiled of its purpose, he could imagine that he might have turned to it and said in some such tone as Eleanor had just used: "Is there anything that I can do for you?"

Then he smiled at the vagary and answered gently: "I think not, unless—you might talk to me. The nurse attends to everything else."

Eleanor sat down on the rim of the footboard, smiling a little in the bantering way she had when she wanted either to talk or to incite talk in a man.

"I don't suppose Dr. Marsten's prescriptions mention chatter, or probably I should have been sent for before," she answered gaily.

Gaily! Well, why not? If wise people affected a certain flippancy toward life, why not toward death, its mate, its grand finale? Eleanor and he had always been a little gay between themselves, at the time that they had been—other things between themselves. He remembered that she had laughed deliciously—he used the adjective because the laugh had been infectious and had made her more than expectedly pretty at the time—when a blackberry brier had caught in her shoe and climbed to the lace of her underskirt, where it had gone out of its way in resisting his attempts to check its further intimacy. She had laughed when he missed her, when his after-dinner cigar had seemed stale because they were in different rooms. She had laughed at his very loverliness in their courtship days, laughed in a sweet, teeth showing, careless way from sheer happiness. And light spirits had bubbled in him, too. He had laughed with her in tender comradeship, just because he couldn't help it, and because she was his, and he had brought her the happiness that in turn had paid its debt to him in her laugh.

And now she had come—to laugh even over *this*! Well—he would meet her humor, so that when the reckoning

time was over she could not accuse him of dullness. The poor little girl had so many things to accuse him of, he reasoned—because she could not understand, and he could not explain. Clear-sighted as men are on the borderland, he wondered why women had been denied the gift of understanding the things that men might not explain. There were any number of them.

"As usual," he said, trying to imitate her gayness, "you're on bed rock bottom. Chatter is senselessly proscribed. It's all in the prefix, you see. As a matter of fact, the doctor has another think coming—"

"And I," she interrupted, swinging her feet around on the white counterpane, "like my famous prototype, 'came also.' Not his thought, perhaps—"

"No—mine," he added, in their old gay habit of interrupting.

She looked at him thoughtfully; then she flushed.

"But have you nothing on for tonight, Eleanor?" he asked.

"It's not usual for you to uphold my extravagance," she said, mock reproach in her tone. "Do you remember when you used to scold me for it?"

"I remember that I never dared. But it is really quite ravishing."

He flopped over recklessly on his back, looking with frank wistfulness at the low cut gown of some pale, shimmering material that seemed to bunch cloud-like before his eyes. There was a scatter of pink to it, as if the pink had dropped in flakes over a shine of silver. Her arms and shoulders rose from it, triumphantly sure in their beauty of matching pink and white—magic pink and white, he thought as he looked.

"Ravishing," he repeated. "That is the earth word for it."

"Why do you say 'earth word'?"

His foot under the cover touched her shoe fumblingly as he moved, goaded into consciousness by the question.

"Why? Oh—nothing. It's merely a phrase. But, seriously, Eleanor, have you time—for all this? If you're giving up a dinner—or anything else to talk to me—"

"What makes you think I am?"

"The fact that you're here, chiefly. Your dress, too, helps convict you."

"Dear me, Keene! Do you expect me to wear a shirtwaist in the evening?"

He halted, conscious of the issue behind the question. Marian had worn a shirtwaist seven days out of seven and looked the part, which Eleanor could not do one day out of seven. Marian, too, in negligee, sued for admiration, which he had given her—so Eleanor thought. Well, he had. But the other things that Eleanor thought he had given her he hadn't. Yet how could he tell her so? If she couldn't trust him—if she would hold him to account for being courteous to an agreeable woman—if she could misconstrue *camaraderie* for love making, why—that ended it. Man-like, that ended it. So he spoke bitterly.

"I hadn't thought about it—that way," he said. "I, of course, expect you to wear—what you do. But I don't see the sense of your coming here in that pink, shiny nonsense—to talk to a sick man."

"You are peevish," she said, kicking the lump under the counterpane which she supposed to be his foot. "Could there have been any sense in my changing my dinner dress just—to talk to a sick man?"

He melted penitently. "I'm a bear," he said. "But, Eleanor dear, I don't like to think of you in this room. It must be a cage—to a well person. The smell of carbolic alone is enough to make one think of a dog's bath."

"I don't smell any carbolic."

"And that bunch of bottles on the stand." Havencourt shrugged disgustedly. "I'd *have* to be sick to do justice to them. You see, it's the atmosphere here. It's *keeping* me down. Every time I get one of those four-dollar-per-day smiles from that nurse I develop a new hundred-point system of aches. But"—breaking off with whimsical suddenness—"to see you sitting on the foot-board of my bed like that—"

She laughed. "I suppose it is clumsy! Would you rather see me in a chair?"

"No—only don't lose your balance.

Isn't this the night of the Caruthers' dinner, Eleanor?"

"Yes, I think so."

"You will be late, won't you?"

"I'm never late to a dinner. Promptness is one of my vices."

"Evidently you're trying to overcome it. Can you afford to be careless when you have so few?"

"So few! I've a whole fistful of them! You know that, Keene, perfectly well. Besides, I'm not trying to overcome it. You can't expect me to eat two dinners in one night!"

"I didn't know that the Caruthers' dinners went in pairs—like their babies."

"How ridiculous! I never said that their execrable taste extended to dinners. Their dinners are really very good, but—I've had mine."

"Why did you do that—alone?"

"Habit, I suppose. I've done it for twenty-two years and lots of times alone."

"But you expected to dine out to-night."

"No, I didn't—or I should have done it. Do you want me to go so badly? Am I bothering you or boring you?"

Havencourt did not immediately reply. He knew, of course, why she had come—out of pity for him. Everybody pitied a man under bed blankets—even hard women like Eleanor. But to-night where was the hardness—where was that wary, weary politeness that each had served to the other for the last year or more? He could not detect it. The woman who sat on his foot-board seemed to him—oh, of course, it was absurd, but she *did* seem to him such a pathetic little bunch of clothes and face—all clothes and face and tightened wrist muscles, as if the tension of the hand had flexed mostly at the wrist. And her mouth laughed so often, but her eyes not once.

Her eyes—pshaw! When a man had to die—and wanted to live—was he not apt to be seized with all sorts of ridiculous fancies? For instance, the one that came to him now—as if that stricken, agonized muteness which he thought he saw in Eleanor's eyes was in reality there—and just beneath the muteness,

that lure of love, that old, heavenly sweet expression of desire that enfolded him in remembered winged whiteness—winged, because perennially coming and going. Where was to be the end of such gargantuan fancy on his part?

Then suddenly consciousness shivered its thought into every fiber of him. Eleanor *knew*. She knew that he was cutting his cables for the last drifting. Dr. Marsten had told her—bluntly and brutally, probably. Marsten had the delicacy of a megalosaurus when it came to shoving a person into the next world. Eleanor had come to him because she had been told that he was dying. Pity stirred within her, that pity which he knew to be so easily aroused. Why, she would have come to a sawdust dummy, if it were being swept up for the fire. He recalled some of her small tenderesses. A twisted-legged fly, a heap of yellow dust from a mashed lightning bug, would have called forth a ridiculous amount of sympathy from her.

And now he, Keene Havencourt, made his appeal to her. Yes, it was simple, unsexed pity that she felt for him—for the mystery of the death toward which he was going. She had given him over the evening—a thing that she had not done before since the accident—as to one who had but few evenings more to spend on earth. He would not allow it—no. Havencourt's jaw set firmly as he replied:

"No, you are not boring me. And I remember that I asked you to stay and talk; but I had forgotten at the time that it was the Caruthers' dinner night. Now you'd really better take yourself off, I think."

"Positively, Keene, I'm not going to the dinner," she said in a voice that coupled it with a pin in importance.

A flush mounted to Havencourt's brow. "Eleanor," he said bluntly, "you must not pity me."

"Why—what?" she stammered.

"Look here," he said quietly; "Marsten has told you."

She did not reply, but her face whitened so that the sick man looked at her curiously. Pity had made her nervous,

he supposed. It was, of course, the general helplessness, the definite mystery of the position in which they both suddenly found themselves, that had so agitated her.

"It's all right," he said, seizing nervously the straw of that platitude. "I don't suppose it really makes much difference. At first I thought it did—"

"First thoughts, like first impressions, are generally correct," she contributed in a queerly flat tone.

"Well, I suppose there's something in everybody that rebels against quitting in the middle of the day. And yet, who was it that said—somebody pretty high up, too, if I remember—that he'd 'rather be killed than die'?"

"Caesar," she responded readily.

"It's curious how you remember those things. It's a paradox, perhaps, but there's something in it. If that infernal car hadn't bungled—if it had killed me at once, instead of leaving me here to die when I got good and ready—it would have been better. At least, then, it would have made no difference to me."

"But—to her?"

He looked up startled. Eleanor looked startled, too, and her voice was bitter. He sensed rapidly that the question had been dragged from her against her will, and certainly contrary to her intention. After having been at her tongue's end for the past year—at her tongue's end and yet shut resolutely between her teeth—it had come from her now at this crucial last moment.

Well, he was nearly done for now. He would tell her—something of it all. She might believe him. He even caught at the hope that she might understand. So he half sat up, leaning on one arm, and said earnestly:

"Look here, Eleanor, you're all wrong about Marian—dead wrong! I never explained before, because your attitude didn't invite me to take the chance. Instead of coming to me point blank about it, you preferred to thresh it out in your own mind—from your prejudiced viewpoint. I know," he added in a different tone, as she sat tensely, angrily white before him, "how you went

to yourself about it, instead of coming to me. I heard you crying one night—"

"You didn't!" she interrupted quickly. "At least, not about that!"

"About that," he continued gently. "I—almost went to you that night. You were crying about nothing."

"I wasn't; I—had toothache."

"You made me feel that I was a brute. I got as far as your door, and then—I went back. I remembered that you hadn't trusted me enough to talk it over with me even. You never trusted me at all—that's the whole thing in a nutshell. When Marian and I roughed it together you thought that I was making love to her. I did make love once to Marian—"

"You needn't tell me about it," she interrupted chokingly.

"The year before I married you," he went on imperturbably. "I asked her to marry me. She threw me over."

Eleanor started protestingly. "I suppose you expect me to believe that," she said sarcastically.

"I do," Keene smiled wearily. "She never loved me in the slightest, but she was the bulkiest chum that a man ever could have had. Why, she—" He went on reminiscently, telling her some of their intimate experiences. He laid them all bare to her, friendly, funny experiences as they came back to him, keeping nothing hidden—for there was nothing to hide—sometimes laughing as he talked and sometimes his voice breaking a little. Beginning from the time that he had first met Marian Teller, he went on connectedly to the time of his last seeing her. "I'd like you to understand," he said gently when he had finished.

"Why didn't you tell me before?" she asked.

"You never asked me. You wanted to know, but you wouldn't ask me. You just stopped loving me—and it made me feel bitter. I was wrong, of course. I should have come to you instead of harping obstinately on the thought that you believed me incapable of being chummy with an agreeable woman without making love to her. You see, I let it go on—until I lost your love."

Then she asked a strange question.

"Does Marian know—of your accident? Do you want me to send for her?"

"Send for her?" he repeated, wondering. Then suddenly things cleared, and he knew that she understood. She understood everything that he had had for her to understand of his friendship for Marian, and he blessed her gratefully for that comprehension. Is it not, after all, divine compensation that a man, flat on his back in bed, can say things to a woman which she never could have understood if he had been up and about?

Havencourt felt now that she understood everything—except the fact that he still loved her; but he supposed that there could come no good of her knowing that. It might even cause her pain, for Eleanor was tender-hearted, foolishly tender about hurting other people. This trait in her would probably lead her to pretend that she cared in return when she didn't; and Havencourt thought that he could bear anything better than that.

"No," he said, "we'll not send for her. It couldn't help any; but—it's mighty sweet of you to suggest it. You couldn't have said that you understood in a nicer way. After I'm gone now, I know that you'll let nothing upset this belief in me, will you, girl?"

She shook her head in the negative.

"Talk it over with Marian, if you like, when you see her. I leave you in charge of my farewell to her. Make it a merry one, and tell her that I positively smelled the pines on the other side before I went; so she'll know that I have a homey feeling toward it. And, Eleanor, there is something that you might do. I'd pretty much like to see Dorn."

"Jimmy!"

She started, her white face becoming pink again.

"Yes. I'd like to talk over with him some of our high old times. Jiminy crickets! What times we've had! There's something else, too, that I'd like to talk to him about. Oh—hang it all—there's something about Dorn that men—and women, too, I guess—just

fall for. You've got him tracked, haven't you? What is the quickest you can get him here?"

"In about a week, I think."

"A week! Where is he?"

"In California."

"Hang it! Send him a wire. But, look here, Eleanor; don't say I'm dying. That sounds so—so cheap. Can't you get him in some other way?"

"I don't know. He wouldn't come, probably, unless it's important."

Havencourt reflected. "I think he'd come if you said that you needed him," he said slowly.

"Perhaps—but I don't need him."

Palpable, momentarily increasing twilight lay about the room. Eleanor looked more than ever all clothes and face as Havencourt watched her, a pathetic, soft thing, half flesh, half fabric, which he passionately wanted to hold in his arms. The whiteness of her skin, blotched here and there by darker spots, her eyes and lips, seemed to come to him in a strangely real way, as if it were something alive, hunting for care. He was aware of her slipper resting unconsciously against the lump that his foot made under the blanket. The piercing sweetness of contact quivered through him suddenly. He was not dead yet. Dead! To feel like that—when almost dead! Nerve and pulse and blood jumping, his whole consciousness a-quiver for Eleanor!

"What is it?" she asked, as if divining the motionless stir.

Then he lied to her, as men who are tortured by the senses must, when the response that they want would be given to them only from pity.

"It's about Dorn," he said, praying wordlessly for strength to give her up. "I've been thinking—it all seems so plain with your slipper lying against my foot like that—"

"What seems plain?" From the muffled sound of her voice, her lips might have been lying there, too.

"That you are going—to belong to Dorn—after I'm gone."

He paused. "After I'm gone, of course," he went on, "for I don't think that I could give you to him before. But

in the next deal of cards you won't have to save me a hand. Then—"

He stopped suddenly. Eleanor was crying—the little tenderfoot! She was crying, bunched up in a heap at his feet. He didn't know just when she had slipped down off the footboard. In the half-darkness she seemed like a live ball, curled in some inextricable way—very ruinous he supposed to her dress. And she was crying—like that!

Well—Havencourt cleared his throat. He would not be pitied. What a queer little tenderfoot she was, after all! His voice, when he spoke, was very gentle.

"Eleanor—don't, dear! There isn't a blessed thing to feel that way about. It was up to me to keep your happiness for you, and I—well, I muffed, that's all. Dorn won't. He's the only one I'd leave you to. Jimmy's as wholesome as cold baths. Lord! He'd never get his back up over the things I did. All this high-backed nonsense about your not trusting him wouldn't go with him. And, Eleanor—"

"Yes?"

"Dorn never would have let you get so lonesome—that you had to go to another man for love."

"I never—went," she broke in quickly.

"No, you sweet, white woman; you never went—bless you! My trust in you knows that you never would have gone while I lived. But it will be different—soon. Your heritage is happiness, and Dorn has it for you in trust. Remember, I want it to be so. Eleanor—don't! You are crying through the counterpane."

"I don't care what I'm crying through!"

Havencourt smiled faintly. "Are you reproaching yourself that you care for Dorn? I understand, Eleanor. I know—you can't help it; only, I'd just as soon you'd wait until I went—before you cared so desperately. But, as I said before, there's something about Jimmy—"

"There's nothing about Jimmy!" she interrupted passionately. "*Nothing!* I've never been the first thing of anything to him! There have been times when I couldn't even see him!"

Havencourt sat up, trembling. He could reach her then. "Eleanor—when?"

She did not answer.

"Eleanor, stop crying. Come here."

She did not heed him.

"When did you stop loving Dorn?"

"I never stopped—because I never began; and now you want me—to begin!"

Wanted her to begin! Havencourt managed then to get a good hold of the soft ball at his feet.

"Come here! I forbid you to love Dorn—absolutely forbid it, do you understand? Jimmy's all right, but—"

"Jimmy's a darling!" she interrupted, crying in a spent way against his shoulder.

"Eleanor—I love you! What on earth are you crying like that for?"

But Havencourt knew—and a bitterness went over him—and then a joy, a queer, straining joy, as he held the little wet-faced tenderfoot to him. The fighting instinct rose within him as he lifted her face from his shoulder.

"Go bathe your eyes," he said, "and take off that dress and then come here. Throw those bottles out of the window and send the nurse home. If she won't go, call the night watchman. Tell Andrews not to let Dr. Marsten into the house tonight, if he values his life. And listen—"

"Keene!" It was Eleanor's voice, piercing in its joy. "Keene—you are going to get well!"

He smiled at her tenderly. "I'm going to make the fight—for you. Marsten said something to me about taking a fighting chance. He couldn't give it to me, but you have—and I'm going to take it!"



FICTION

By STUART B. STONE

FICTION is a form of literary composition detailing a series of imaginary events in the lives of goddesslike, Circassian-haired young women and square-jawed, iron-willed men who never talk ungrammatically or uninterestingly, located usually in the Balkans, Podunk, Newport, Wall Street, an Italian rose garden or the heart of an ancient wood. Fiction is bound between flamboyant covers, is interspersed with illustrations in color by Christy, Fisher, Leyendecker & Company, is advertised at \$1.50, sold during the first six months after publication at \$1.08, during the next succeeding six months at 44 cents and afterward macerated and forgotten. Fiction was issued formerly in three-volume dimensions, but the modern tendency to fletcherize embraces even literature, and it is nowadays necessary to employ an astonishing number of sleigh bells, cornucopias, waste baskets and other marginal illustrations to round out an 183-page gift book.

Fiction is produced by taking any kind of a hero upon whom the artist can construct a pair of guardsman's shoulders and a bulldog jaw, a heroine who may be either a Carpathian princess or an American heiress, and a villain, and adding sufficient villagers, wolfhounds, cracker-barrel philosophers, prime ministers and other minor characters to stretch through XXIX chapters to "The End." In the days of Scott heroines were delicate and fragile and overaddicted to the use of the smelling salts and the lachrymal glands, but the present tendency is to endow them with riding boots and the golf championship.

Fiction is of various kinds. There is the novel with a purpose—to do away with divorce, to do away with marriage, to do away with children, clubs, cooks, churches and governments. Some novels are written with a purpose known only to the author and carefully concealed by that genius through 550 pages of fine print.

Closely akin to the novel with a purpose is the problem novel, specialized in by Mrs. Humphry Ward and intended to show what a person or persons would, should or could do when confronted with this or that set of circumstances. This form is an excellent headache producer.

The novel of ingenuity is descended from Beadle's Library of barn-loft memory, and differs from its ancestor mainly in the essential of good clothes.

The novel of primal passions is produced by bedecking a brute of the forest with man's face and clothes, turning him loose in the vicinity of a beautiful, red-blooded woman and a thin-chested, effeminate man and noting the results.

The nature novel is manufactured by endowing grizzly bears, jenny wrens and Saint Bernards with mental and vocal attainments and allowing them to talk, love and kill until Theodore Roosevelt calls a halt.

The principal use of fiction is to entertain, but it is employed in summer, in connection with sofa pillows, fans, hammocks, peekaboo waists and young women to make business for the parsons—and the divorce courts. It is also marked down to 49 cents by the great department stores and used to entice possible purchasers of ranges, lawn mowers, chiffons, *peau de soie* and ice cream soda.

ROSE GARLAND

By RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

To the Rose, from one of her Nightingales

TO thee, my Rose, whose heart
Against me closes,
I send—where'er thou art—
This Book of Roses.

'Tis sweet, as fits thy praise,
Thine and the Rose's,
Sweet when it opens,
Sweet, too, when it closes.

To thee thy Nightingale
Of many poses
Sends here these nightingales
Of many roses;

Lightnings may flicker round my head,
And all the world seem doom,
If you, like a wild rose, will walk
Strangely into my room.

If only my sad heart may hear
Your voice of faery laughter—
What matters to my grateful heart
What thunder follows after?

All the wide world is but the thought of you:
Who made you out of wonder and of dew?
Was it some god with tears in his deep eyes,
Who loved a woman white and otherwise,
That strangely put all violets in your hair—
And put into your face all distance, too?

I said—I care not if I can
But look into her eyes again,
But lay my hand within her hand
Just once again.

Though all the world be filled with snow
And fire and cataclysmal storm,
I'll cross it just to lay my head
Upon her bosom warm.

ROSE GARLAND

Ah, bosom made of April flowers,
 Oh, may I bring this aching brain,
 This foolish head, and lay it down
 On April once again!

All the words in all the world
 Cannot tell you how I love you,
 All the little stars that shine
 To make a silver crown above you.

All the flowers cannot weave
 A garland worthy of your hair,
 Not a bird in the four winds
 Can sing of you that is so fair.

Only the spheres can sing of you;
 Some planet in celestial space,
 Hallowed and lonely in the dawn,
 Shall sing the poem of your face.

Songs sweeter far than he
 Could ever sing thee,
 From truer hearts than he
 Could ever bring thee.

Ah! All his songs are hushed
 For lack of roses,
 Rose of the World, more fair
 Than other rose is.

Is there for nightingales
 No hope of pardon,
 Rose fairer far than rose
 In any garden?

Oh, can it be soft breast
 Hard heart incloses,
 Dear heart, where never now
 My head reposes?

May gates of iron and bronze
 Be opened lightly;
 But flower fist so soft
 Keep shut so tightly?

Ah! Any nightingale
 That knows his roses,
 Knows that it opens not
 When once it closes.

So now no more, dear Rose,
 Of my beseeching;
 I go to find the truths
 The thorns are teaching.

THE ADVENTURE OF MRS. CRAVENSHAUGH

By LOUISE MAUNSELL FIELD

MRS. ALLINGHAM CRAVENSHAUGH leaned back in one corner of the hansom and closed her eyes. It was intensely hot, and Fifth Avenue, always forlorn-looking in summertime, seemed completely deserted. Mrs. Cravenshaugh decided that she had made a mistake in coming to town; it was not worth while, even for the sake of obtaining the very striking costume she had secured for the approaching *bal poudré*. There were few things that Mrs. Cravenshaugh regarded as sufficiently important to warrant much exertion on her part, which was doubtless the reason why, at thirty and more, her forehead was as smooth, her complexion as flawless, as when some dozen years before all social New York called her "the beautiful Miss Trouvarde." Effort and emotion were factors which had scarcely entered into the drawing-room comedy of her existence.

Momentarily the heat increased. "It will be nice to get back to Meadowmere," thought Mrs. Cravenshaugh. "I wonder if this evening—"

She never finished the sentence, for one of the wheels of the hansom caught in a hole—something broke—there came a lurch, a cry from the cabby, and Mrs. Allingham Cravenshaugh was thrown to the ground!

An instant she lay stunned, more by surprise than injury, while around her a crowd gathered with marvelous swiftness. Her first thought was that she must look ridiculous; then she felt a sharp pain in her wrist. She raised herself a little as a gentleman came

hurrying toward her, followed by a fat, perspiring policeman. Still dizzy from her fall she could not see his face, but his deft touch betrayed the skilled physician.

"D'yez think Oi'd betther sind fer an amb'lance, Docthor?" she heard the policeman ask.

"I don't believe it will be necessary," was the reply, and Mrs. Cravenshaugh gave a little start, for the voice sounded strangely familiar. She turned her head to look at the man bending over her, and as their glance met recognition leaped into his eyes, while her own vague memories became definite.

"Fred Courtland!" she half whispered.

"Why, Miss Trouvarde!"

"Do please call a cab and get me away from this mob."

Mrs. Cravenshaugh was speedily helped into a coupé, a shabby refuge she hailed with joy. The idea that *she*, of all people, had been a spectacle for a crowd to gape at was so disagreeable as to make her forget her sprained wrist. No thought of the driver's possible injuries entered her head, but Dr. Courtland took it as a matter of course that she must be interested in the fate of her fellow sufferer.

"Your cabby wasn't hurt a bit," he said cheerfully. "It was a wonderful escape for both of you."

Mrs. Cravenshaugh made a little grimace. "I didn't escape entirely," she replied. "I think my wrist is sprained."

"Let me see it. There!" he added a minute later. "That's all I can do

now. Where shall I tell the man to drive to?"

"Really, I don't know. I'm only in town for the day, and my house is closed."

"Suppose you come to mine. It's quite near, and I can attend to your wrist and then telephone Mr.—your husband." He was unable to recall her married name.

Unwittingly, she told him. "Mr. Cravenshaugh's off yachting somewhere. But it doesn't matter. I'm sure I can go back on the four-thirty."

The doctor gave an order and they drove on in silence. Images from the past came thronging into Mrs. Cravenshaugh's mind. How well she remembered what had happened the summer before she came out, when her mother left her with her governess at a quiet little country place! That handsome young medical student, their walks and talks and sittings out upon the veranda on moonlight nights. Why, they were actually engaged when her mother's arrival abruptly ended their little romance. They had never met since until this day's unexpected encounter, but she had thought of him occasionally, semi-sentimental thoughts which were very pleasant. She wondered whether he were married.

"How little you have changed!" she said, plunging boldly into reminiscence. "I knew you at once."

He turned to her with a smile. "You haven't altered much yourself. I recognized you the instant I got a good look at you. It's odd we've never met before. Do you live in New York?"

She glanced up at him, surprised. It was too silly for him to pretend that he knew nothing about her! How could anyone live in New York without hearing of Mrs. Allingham Cravenshaugh, whose every movement was chronicled in all the newspapers? Such posing was quite unlike the frank young student of her memories. She looked at him again, and his serenity rather disconcerted her. "I've always lived here," she replied at last. "But perhaps you're not often in town?"

"Oh, yes; my work keeps me in the city most of the year. And you—you do society, I suppose?"

This to her! Mrs. Cravenshaugh fairly gasped—a most unusual display of emotion. His sincerity was obvious and his ignorance incomprehensible. "I go about a good deal," she replied rather shortly.

The cab drew up before the doctor's house, and Mrs. Cravenshaugh looked about her with considerable interest. So this was where Fred Courtland lived—this small house on a quiet side street! And it might have been her home! Was he, too, she wondered, while he bandaged her wrist, thinking of that "might have been"? At last she asked the question which had been in her mind ever since their meeting: "Is your wife in town? I'd so like to meet her."

The doctor did not reply immediately. He finished fastening the bandages before he said: "Sorry to disappoint you, but I'm not married."

Mrs. Cravenshaugh felt a thrill of pleasure. That little pause—well, it proved how much he must have cared. With suddenly increased interest, she said: "Do tell me about yourself. I remember how ambitious you used to be. Have you succeeded?"

The man, whose performances of the delicate and dangerous operations which bore his name had restored many to sanity and were regarded as among the greatest triumphs of twentieth century science, smiled a little. "Yes, I have succeeded. It's been comparatively easy for me," he added modestly, "because I never had to work for bread and butter. An income of one's own is an immense help."

That absurd little income! Two—or was it three thousand a year? She remembered her mother's emphatic: "He has barely enough to pay for your gowns, my dear." Success! She looked about the simply furnished room. Was this what he called "success"? Apparently he was not rich, and as for social position—had he possessed that, they would have met

long ago. Well, since he tried to conceal his failure and wear a brave face, it would be unkind to let him see that she guessed the truth. Perhaps she could help him a bit. This idea in mind, she asked: "Are you a regular physician or a surgeon?"

"I'm a specialist."

This sounded promising. "A specialist! In what?"

"Diseases of the brain."

Mrs. Cravenshaugh's face fell, and the doctor, reading her thoughts, went on: "I became interested in that work while I was in the hospital. Operations on the brain are very exciting—and profitable, too," he added, wishing good-naturedly to relieve her mind.

She sighed and gave it up. If he found messing with people's brains "exciting" and called work "profitable" that didn't pay enough to enable him to get out of this horrid little house, why, nothing could be done. Still, she did feel sorry for him, remembering that pause before he avowed himself a bachelor, and his solicitude for her comfort struck her as most pathetic. Settled at last in the Meadowmere train, she tried to think of some charming little speech, recollection of which might cheer his loneliness, but while she was yet endeavoring to compose a few appropriate sentences the bell rang and the doctor had to hurry off. However, she gave him her sweetest smile and a good-bye which she did her best to fill with sympathy and gentle regret.

"Fred's handsomer than ever, if anything. To think of his being faithful to me all these years! Poor dear fellow! It's best as it is, though. I'd have been miserable with him,

just as mamma prophesied. I only hope seeing me today hasn't made it harder for him. He must have a dreadful life, slaving in the city all summer and earning just enough to keep body and soul together. I wish I could do something for him, but he made it very plain he didn't want any help from me. I suppose the mere thought of accepting money from my husband would be dreadful to him. Oh, dear! Why doesn't he go in for appendicitis or nervous prostration, something nice people have? And just to think that I came so near marrying him! Well, I knew he was very much in love with me, but I didn't expect it would last all his life." Thus Mrs. Cravenshaugh reflected pleasantly while journeying homeward.

Dr. Courtland watched the train pull out of the station; then he shrugged his shoulders and walked away. "So that's Lucille Trouvarde!" he thought. "I'd forgotten her completely, and yet I believe there was a time when I thought I couldn't live without her. Thank goodness, I had a chance to find out how wrong I was, without having to pay the price of such a mistake! Why, we were engaged, and her mother broke it off. I remember all about it now. Bless the old woman, wherever she may be! Nice time I'd have had of it, with a millstone like that hung around my neck! I'd have been a raving lunatic myself in a year. Good Lord, I'd sooner marry a wax doll! She'd be just as pretty and not half the bother."

But Mrs. Cravenshaugh, in all the bliss of ignorance, was well content. For the first, last and only time in her well regulated life, she had had an adventure.



MISS HAUTY—You are old before your time.

MR. NAUTY—But think of the time I had before I was old!

TO MY SUMMER GIRL

By JOHN TROLANDS

NOVEMBER by the calendar—
The world without is drear;
A wild wind makes the casement jar,
And winter must be near.

But yet, today, one thought of thee.
Sets all the air attune.
Forsooth, November it may be—
My heart is yet in June!



COME!

By FLORENCE L. LANCASTER

COME to me, for the night is growing late;
Outside, the lone wind, wailing, shakes the pane.
I cannot sleep, but, longing, lie awake,
And in the darkness softly call thy name.
Let thy warm pressing fingers clasp my own;
Shelter me closely 'gainst thy gentle breast;
A "Good night" murmur in low, loving tone;
Then I shall sweetly rest.

One day thou wilt, though now we, far apart,
Must tread the road of life marked out for each,
Steadfast to truth to win desire of heart;
Strive, learn and pray, the worthy hope to reach.
But when perchance the victory be won,
And the last goal gained in the finished race,
Then thou wilt come when life's long journey's done,
And soul to soul, we stand as face to face!

DID ARCHIE WIN?

By FRANK WILLIAMS

MESSRS. Archie Tubbs and Emerson Witherspoon were watching the departure of the summer garden year. It was a Saturday night in October, and thereafter liquid comfort would be served below stairs, even to such a regular customer as the admirable Tubbs. It was becoming rather cold and disagreeable under the open sky; the waiters shivered, the soup got stone cold, and the ladies were unable to divest themselves of their outer wraps to show their evening gowns—all of which had influenced the management.

Mr. Tubbs had arrived at the stage in the evening's entertainment where he spoke Latin whenever the severe-looking Mr. Witherspoon, who glared along a slim and lengthy nose through strong glasses, would let him.

"Take that beautiful first ode of Horace," he was saying as the orchestra stopped. "Can you match it for lyric grace and loveliness?" And he quoted:

*"Maecenas atavis, edite regibus,
O et praesidium et dulce decus meum."*

"You're a potvaliant old rake, aren't you?" suggested the thin, cold voice of Mr. Witherspoon. "You can hardly talk English, let alone Latin. I'd stick to the mother tongue if I were you, and answer a few questions."

"Five dollars I can go on with the ode; take it?" was the reply of the addled Mr. Tubbs, who looked perplexedly at the almost empty bottle before him.

"Take it," shortly assented the other.

"Sunt quos curriculos, pulverem Olympicum—" placidly resumed Tubbs, and stopped short at the end of the line. "That's all I know," he added. "Pay up."

Emerson Witherspoon's thin lips stretched into a smile as he slid the money across the table. He was a sport, if he was only a brother-in-law, and Archie acknowledged the fact, frankly ordering another bottle.

"Where's Louise?" asked Emerson, referring to Tubbs's wife.

"Home, I guess, Emmy," replied Tubbs. "Probably home with little Archie, thinking of me as a dutiful wife should. I telephoned them tonight that I couldn't get to the house in time for dinner. You told me not to mention your coming, so I didn't. We'll take you back as a little surprise after I've beat you on quotations from Cæsar's Commentaries and Juvenal's seventh satire. In about an hour the second chapter of the third book of Cæsar will be quite clear, and just an hour and a quarter later the inimitable seventh is due."

"Do you know why I came here?" asked Witherspoon severely.

"No, I don't, and I don't want to—just yet," was the reply. "You wait for Juvenal, and after that you can tell me anything—even how much you love me," and the satire got home to Witherspoon.

He let the question drop for the present, and let his gaze wander aimlessly about the beautiful garden, where they sat with the bare, clean sky above them and the faint roar of the streets mingling with the conversation. He was from Boston, and was not accustomed to sights of the sort.

His curious but well bred glance approved of the softly colored lights, the trees, flowers and shrubs, and the general scene of gaiety. But the women

he looked at displeased him extremely. Their expensive garments were cut daringly low—perhaps purposely, he thought; their faces were too often smiling and their hair was too often blonde to suit his discriminating taste.

"What do you call this, Archie—the Tabasco Temple?" he inquired of the young man, who had turned around and fixed a pair of glasses at a thoroughly unstable angle on his nose, and was preparing for a general survey of the garden.

"That's not the real name, but it might as well be," the latter agreed whimsically. "It's a pretty fly joint, and the broilers are none of your Philadelphia dope dream squabs, either, take it from me. If it wasn't that I never misbehaved myself here, I would never visit the place. My eye! But there are some beauties here, at that!"

"Well," continued Witherspoon, leaning over the table, "you've no business here, and that's what I came down from Boston to tell you. Now you needn't get huffy, because I'm going to talk to you straight, and I'm not going to wait till you get rid of any more Latin. About the only Latin you need is a *paternoster*."

"Well, what is it, old chap?" asked Archie blithely.

"As you know," went on Witherspoon, "Louise has written me about your neglect of her; she told you she was going to. Night after night you come down to one of these places and spend the hours, while she sits at home lonesome and unhappy, and weeps her heart out when little Archie has been put to bed. I have made no new move for two months, but now that I get no encouraging word from her, I have come down here to have a talk with you. Louise is my sister, and I won't have her treated that way by anyone, least of all her husband."

He glared firmly into the liquid eye of the blond gentleman opposite him and seemed to rivet the latter's attention.

"Do you know what day this is?" he asked. "Well, it's your birthday, and a week from today is Louise's birthday. Have you remembered them? Not for

a minute! I recall how, the first three or four years after your marriage, every birthday was a feast day, and you had a little celebration in honor of it. But that seems to be all changed."

"Yes, that's all changed," replied Archie without a tinge of melancholy, waving a large hand inclusively about him; "and it's pretty near time to bet on Cæsar's Commentaries. Whenever you're ready just lay your money under the matchstand."

Witherspoon bit a scornful lip.

"I won't bet you on any Latin rot, Tubbs," he replied determinedly, "but I'll guarantee that your wife has remembered your birthday, and that's more than you've done."

"My dear fellow, she didn't say anything about it when I called up at dinner time, so how could she have remembered?" and Archie sank back with an air of having demolished the universe.

"She was too hurt. Do you suppose any woman that has undergone the trials with a pig of a husband that your wife has in the last year and a half is going to do any more? No, sir! If you can't come to the scratch yourself she won't come and bring you to it. When we get home we'll just look around, and if Louise didn't have the nicest dinner on earth for you, I'll give you the five dollars coming to you on Cæsar's Commentaries. And if there isn't a present on your bedroom table we'll consider that you deliver the seventh satire faultlessly. Are you on?"

"Everything but the water wagon," said Mr. Tubbs, smiling brilliantly at his companion. "Let's go home and prove it, and if you win I'll get on that, too."

They beckoned the waiter; Witherspoon paid the check and Archie was loaded into his coat. He slapped the waiter on the back, they being of long acquaintance, and told him cheerfully that he might never see him again.

"I hope not that, sir," exclaimed the man, and quailed beneath the eye of Mr. Witherspoon.

As they were about to take the elevator, the waiter came running after them, holding out a package.

"Oh, Mr. Tubbs," he said, "the manager says he hopes you'll take home one of our souvenirs. We usually only give 'em to ladies, you know, he says, but seeing you are one of our best cust—friends, he hopes you'll take it and remember us till we open again next summer. They're solid silver, and made in Paris especially for us."

"Embrace the manager for me, gar-song," replied Tubbs graciously, "and tell him he couldn't have done better. I shall treasure this as my most priceless possession. Adieu, adieu."

"It strikes me that will be a pretty good little present for a week from to-day," suggested Witherspoon. They examined the souvenir. It was a beautiful silver hand mirror, and was heavy with the solid metal. Figures of nymphs wound their undulating lengths around the handle, holding branches and flowers in their arms that spread out across the back. The work had been carefully done, the infinite and rich detail of the foliage having been carved with great skill and at no little expense. At the bottom of the handle was the initial of the café almost hidden in scrollwork and barely discernible.

"By George! Great idea, Emmy!" said Tubbs. "We'll give it to little wife on her birthday. Good little wife. Almost feel sentimental over little wife since Emmy has been talking so much about her. It'll be awfully good to see her again. Awful lonesome—I haven't seen her in so long."

The cold, bracing air of the street refreshed them so when they stepped outside that they decided to walk the ten blocks to the house instead of taking the taxicab which had driven up when they emerged.

Emerson Witherspoon resumed his lecture. He was a bit loquacious himself now, for it is a well known fact that even a Puritan from Boston cannot drink an erring brother-in-law into a state of receptivity without showing at least superficial effects. Earnestly Witherspoon plied his arguments in behalf of prohibition and the sanctity of the fireside.

Tubbs, upon whom the cold air had a

decided effect, lapsed from unseemly hilarity and began to show signs of sentimentality. Bibulous tears gathered in his voice, and as they proceeded up Broadway a pearly drop of sorrow oozed from his right eye and depended cold and alone from the tip of his round nose.

"You are a cruel man, a rotten husband and a neglectful father," said Witherspoon, continuing his address, indicating the landscape with one hand and clinging to Archie with the other while they crossed and recrossed the sidewalk. "Picture your poor wife—just picture her in her long and lonely vigils waiting for the return of the human derelict to whom she is tied for life. If I ever marry there'll be no woman waiting at home for me. At least, I'll be a sport and take her along."

"Yes, you're right," agreed Tubbs with the melancholy of the doleful tombs in his voice. "I'm a brute, a ravening beast, justly described by Cæsar when he says, '*Omnia Gallia in tres partes divisa est.*' Stevenson would also remark on such an occasion, '*Virginibus puerisque.*'"

"A rolling stone shouldn't live in glass houses, and I've been nothing but a rolling stone. I've lived in a glass house until I rolled right through it, and now it's smashed, and the pieces when gathered up wouldn't make a grease spot. Poor Louise—poor, dear Louise, who has never done me a wrong in her whole sweet life! How she must suffer!"

His emotion overcame him. His liquid eyes became the springs whence flowed two rivers of sorrow which lost themselves in the heavy cheviot of Emerson's overcoat. Witherspoon himself was so touched that an undisciplined tear coursed down the lofty bridge of his nose. He recovered himself instantly.

"What a wife!" went on the contrite Archie. "How long she has endured my fiendish persecutions! Many another would have arisen long ago and returned in disgust to her maternal abode—would have refused my caresses and left me to the chill comforts of a deserted home. Yea, may I add, Mr. Speaker, she might even have sought

entertainment in my absence—entertainment of which I knew nothing—gone to a bridge party or played pinochle with the janitor's wife. There is no telling to what wild dissipations a woman might descend under similar circumstances. But did Louise ever do this? I ask you, gentlemen; I pause for a reply.

"She did not! *O tempora! O mores!*" as Cicero so quaintly and wittily puts it; she has been a paragon of virtue through all her tribulations."

"Good avenin', gintlemin," said a large and hearty voice. It was Lafferty, the officer, who made it a point to be at that corner about the same time every night. He had piloted Mr. Tubbs across the uncertain and heaving ocean of Broadway at that spot many a time after said gentleman's too frequent splicing of the main brace. He was on duty as usual.

In a moment Archie was hanging around his neck telling him all about it, while Witherspoon, with his feet on bedrock, swayed like a tree in the wind.

"See, Lafferty, what I've brought her," concluded the recumbent one, producing his mirror. "That's for her birthday next week, and—and—maybe I'm going to cut it all out, anyhow."

"Bully fer ye, me bye," cried the officer, persistently disengaging Archie from his uniform. "Now we'll make the other side of Broadway." Grasping each of his dependents by the arm, the perilous journey was made in safety, but not without high stepping on the part of the majority.

Assuring Lafferty with profound courtesy of their undying debt of affection for him, they proceeded across Seventy-first Street toward Amsterdam Avenue, tacking from lamp post to brown stone steps and from stone steps to lamp post.

"I see a light in the hallway. Emmy, you open the door," murmured Archie, handing over the key he had found on the thirteenth try in his fourteen pockets.

"No; I'm to be the surprise," amended Emerson, handing it back. "You open it."

This exchange of courtesies was of some fifteen minutes' duration, and Emerson finally yielded only because Archie was unable to fulfill his duty as host. "Remember now," whispered the latter, "we must be very quiet. I won't have little wifey disturbed ever again either by her brute of a husband or her pig of a brother. Poor, dear, sweet little wifey, she's probably in bed now weary of waiting for me."

"Or has fallen asleep in her chair from exhaustion," put in Emerson, dripping sentiment with every tone.

The conflict with their overcoats was silent but determined, and shortly the two had untied one another's shoes and slipped them off.

"Now about that bet," suggested Archie. "If there is no supper waiting on the table, you give me five dollars that I would have won by reciting the Commentaries. Is that right?"

"That's four ninety-eight now; you gave us the first line of the first book without permission."

"All right, Russell Sage; four ninety-eight. And if she hasn't left a birthday present, you pay me another five for the seventh satire of Juvenal. Right?"

"Right, old scissor bill. But don't forget that, if you lose, you cut out the drink from now on."

With infinite patience the two traced their steps through the dim hall to the dining room, where Witherspoon suddenly sat down on the waxed floor, his endeavors to hold up Archie, who was seriously intent upon finding the electric switch, proving too much for him. Archie followed, and they lay under the overhanging tablecloth in penitent anguish.

The next trial was more successful, and when the light flooded the room there lay a bountiful cold supper tastefully set out and carefully covered. The thin mouth of Mr. Witherspoon stretched in triumph, and an endeavor to slap Archie playfully on the back resulted in his gaining another view of the table from underneath. But Archie wasn't noticing.

"God bless her—God bless her!" he said, real emotion surging up into his

heart at the sight of this evidence of thought and love on the part of Louise. "There aren't many wives who would stick through what she has and still be as considerate and thoughtful."

"Come on, Archie; we must see about your birthday present," said the dusty Emerson, getting to his feet with the aid of the tablecloth. "Lead me upstairs."

The journey was more like the finish of a close horse race than anything else. First one was ahead and then the other. They landed at the top a dead heat and fell flat on the floor. Not a sound answered the listening of their anxious ears, and if Louise heard it she was discreet enough to give no sign.

A sufficient period having elapsed, they made their way down the hall, and as they passed Louise's door, Archie threw a fervent kiss at the stolid panels. "I hope I lose the other five," he was muttering to himself; "then I'll have to quit. If I don't lose it, I won't know what to do. I want

to quit, but I can't unless I lose my bet. Oh, it's terrible, terrible!"

Sure enough, when Archie had switched on the light in his room, the eagle eye of Witherspoon detected a package wrapped in tissue paper on the chiffonier. He danced with delight, and brought it over to the beaming Tubbs.

There was a letter pinned to it, and Archie, unfolding it tenderly, read aloud to Emerson:

"To my poor, dear, sweet little hubby—(curse this scrawl)—in honor of his birthday, and to show my appreciation of his kindness in leaving me alone for the last two months."

"That's strange," they both gasped together, looking at one another.

Archie took up the gift and fingered it slowly. Then, going to the bed, he grasped one end of the tissue paper and let go of the object. With a rush it unwrapped itself and lay glaring up in their faces.

It was a replica of the mirror Archie had so painfully brought home.



A MERICAN—Don't you like the American girl's dash?
FRENCHMAN—I prefer the French girl's dot.



"HAS he traveled much?"

"I don't think so; he's always talking about the places he's visited."



NOT many men can do a good deed and then think of something else right away.

November, 1910—6

ON THE TERRACE

By "TRESSLER"

I SIT on the terrace of my rose-covered palace hung halfway up the side of the mountain.

High up in the soft stillness I seem very near the great white moon. Far away and below lie the warm river and the dark forest.

Only my shadow sits beside me on the marble terrace of my palace hung halfway up the mountain—only my shadow and I in the perfumed air of a June night.

It is a night for unconfessed lovers—a night for long looks and silences melting into the first passionate kiss.

And I—

I open my arms yearning for the lover who shall move me—who shall make my heart faint and heavy—whose long looks shall make me pale—whose touch shall run through my veins and chain me motionless.

God! What is that—growing out of the air and the moonlight? That tall, lithe form—that dark face—dark as it was when I met his pleading with laughter!

And there—the blond curls and drawn mouth of the boy whose life and soul I made mine and then threw away!

You, too! You, who came to me in the sunshine and wine-scented morning of a Spanish street—whose glowing eyes dimmed in a month and whose heart is filled with hatred of women because of me!

You come to mock me—you—whose love was my pastime—whose pain was my intoxication!

I pay! I pay!

For your agony I am consumed with longing to love—yet the kisses of men leave me cold and unstirred.

For the ashes I gave you—I, who am made for love, sit alone with my shadow on the terrace of my palace hung halfway up the mountain—in the perfumed air of a June night.

AIRSHIPPING

By SAM GAZZAM

I CANNOT believe, as my neighbor does, that aeroplanes will soon be as plentiful as automobiles now are. I do not expect to see the sky so crowded with aeroplanes that the sunlight will be permanently shut off from my bean garden.

In the first place, there is the mortgage difficulty. Four out of five automobiles represent a mortgage placed on the dear old home, and the dear old home will not stand any additional gages. It is satiated with them now. There was the twenty horsepower mortgage placed on the home to buy the two-cylinder runabout, and the forty horsepower second mortgage stuck on to purchase the four-cylinder touring car, and the final and all inclusive sixty horsepower mortgage that had to be squeezed on to pay for the six-cylinder torpedo body noiseless four-speeds-forward car this spring; and after looking over the dear old home and consulting the Title Guarantee company I can't see where an aeroplane mortgage is going to be put.

In the second place, the aeroplane is about as difficult to store as the long-necked giraffe. The giraffe is a beautiful object, and many families would love to have one, but it is difficult to store a giraffe in a hundred-dollar, knockdown, one story garage. The giraffe has to have a cupola on its home, into which it can insert its neck and head, and cupolas do not go with the hundred-dollar garage. The aeroplane has less neck than the giraffe, but it has more wing, and is even more difficult to store.

I can't imagine Jones, who has a forty-foot house on a fifty-foot lot, having an aeroplane, and yet he has an automo-

bile. Of course he has to have his garage so close to the kitchen that the gasoline odor and the fried onion odor are obliged to lie down together like the lion and the lamb, and the passageway between his house and his neighbor's fence is so narrow that if Jones stops on the road to have a highball he can't run his automobile into his garage without taking off part of his house with a left hand hub—but, still, he can store his automobile on his premises.

I say "his" premises, but whose they will be when the mortgages come due is beyond calculation. The first mortgagor may take them, or the second mortgagor may buy in the first mortgage and take them, or the third mortgagor may buy in the first and second mortgages and take them. About the only sure thing—besides death and taxes—is that the premises will pass forever out of the hands of Jones. But I cannot imagine Jones keeping a wide-winged aeroplane on his place, unless someone invents a folding aeroplane that will double up when not in use. Personally I would not care to have a folding aeroplane myself. It might fold up any time, quite unexpectedly, allowing me to drop most impolitely into the middle of a respectable *al fresco* tea party where I had not been invited, and the hostess would think it rude. Anyway, I would not care to alight on a hot teapot.

My neighbor suggests that someone might invent a folding aeroplane that would be a flying machine when unfolded and a bookcase when not in use, thus combining sport and culture, but I see no advantage in this. If I am to soar a mile in the air and then have my aeroplane fold up and drop with me, I

would as lief drop in a plain broken aeroplane as in a wellstocked bookcase. It would not comfort me in the least to know that I was to be dashed to pieces among volumes of Harry Thurston Peck and Hamilton W. Mabie and other cultured works. It might comfort my friends but it would leave me indifferent.

An aeroplane requires about a seventy-foot run, at least, before it soars, and Jones and his fellow automobilists will have about as much chance of owning seventy feet of ground, after their mortgages are foreclosed, as I have of being the next President of the United States, and after making numerous inquiries I am forced to announce that the popular clamor for my election to that office is about as loud and noisy as the breathing of a dead clam. The aeroplane will never be as popular as the bicycle was in the days when the Mother Hubbard gown was the swell dress for afternoon functions in Kansas. A few millionaires may own them in the days to come and meet their deaths comfortably by falling from the clouds.

I certainly hate to throw cold water on the twentieth century, but I am compelled to state that aeroplaning is about as safe as riding through the Niagara rapids in a tin dishpan, and about as apt to become a popular method of travel. An average man would be as safe if he tied himself to the stick of a giant sky rocket and touched the fuse with his lighted cigar. He would fly, but he would eventually return to earth, and, if he alighted on a soft spot, would need no grave, for he would go right on in. If the spot on which he alighted happened to be a stone, a grave would have to be provided, but there would be very little to bury, so a small grave would do.

In its present state the aeroplane is about as useful for practical work as a basket of cheese sticks would be for building bridges. An ordinary tramp, lying on his back and snoring, disturbs the equilibrium of the air to such an extent that the aeroplane passing above him gives a few tremulous flutters and turns upside down, spilling its contents and breaking itself in eighty-four important places. If a lady happens to

wave her fan toward the aero field the aeroplane dares not rise until the hurricane has subsided. If everything is in the best possible state as to air, the daring airman rises grandly, circles three times around the half-mile track, and alights with a bump that jars his lungs down into his abdomen and puts the motor in the machine shop for three weeks. The only luggage it is safe to carry on one of these spectacular air voyages is a brick—a vitrified brick—wrapped in cotton batting.

The steerable gas bag does not seem to me to possess any advantage over the flyable awning type of air vessel. The world is too full of mountains and other warts against which the air bag can—and always does—explode itself. When the day comes that the gas bag can be built of reinforced concrete inclosed in a coating of bullet proof steel, these German and French air conquerors may last a week or so without slapping themselves to pieces against cruel raspberry bushes. At present a wayward mosquito can bump against one of these triumphs of man and utterly ruin it.

In war the aeroplane may be of some use. I would suggest taking the airman well in advance of the war and putting him on a diet of dynamite and nitroglycerine. After being fed he would have to be handled carefully, or he might go off prematurely. When war was declared I would conduct him gently but firmly to his aeroplane and ask him to fly. I would give him a message to be carried beyond the enemy's lines, and the chances would be that his motor would get a hot box just in time to let him drop on a fat generalissimo or two. This would, of course, explode the airman, but that would be little loss, for he would have killed himself eventually, anyway. A battalion or two of well loaded airmen exploding in the enemy's camp would create consternation. The airmen might be made even more deadly by feeding them alternate doses of dynamite and nails.

As a sport airshipping will doubtless appeal to many. Even on the hottest days an airman, darting through the air, is caressed by a cooling breeze, and

the sport is, in this, like the other sport of jumping off the Brooklyn bridge, which latter has, however, the disadvantage of being safer, and therefore less exciting. The bridge jumper is pretty sure where he will alight. Unless a thoughtless tug or ship gets in his way he is pretty sure to alight in the water, but the airman has the pleasant titillation of uncertainty to add to his pleasure. There are one hundred and four things that can happen to an automobile motor to make it stop working, and there are all these and several more that the airman has to contend with, in addition to the things that can happen to his wings, his rudders, his paddles, his guy wires and his own head. Consequently he is possibly due to fall at any moment, and the variety of things on which he can fall is endless. He can fall on a church steeple with a sharp point, or into a kettle of soft soap that Mrs. Murphy is boiling in her back yard, or into a load of coal or on a secondhand book stall. The variety is endless. You can hardly mention a thing that an airman might not fall onto or into, from a tin roof to a barrel of molasses. I am ashamed to mention some of the things, they are so ridiculous. A crate of strawberries, for example.

No, I cannot agree with my neighbor that aeroplanes will soon be as plentiful as automobiles. For all that, however, the aeroplane, even as it is today, is the most wonderful thing in the world. It is the only modern accomplishment that satisfies a world old longing. All our other modern inventions are incidental. They have been created to satisfy wants arising from our gradual progress. The steam car, the steamboat, the telephone and telegraph—all these things and all other applications of machinery to industry and sport have been a gradual growth. But two things have been desired since the earliest ages—one has been the ability to turn baser metals into gold, and the other has been to fly in the air like a bird. In these two longings chemistry and mechanics have run a long race, and mechanics has won; at least, Hamilton flies as well as Icarus ever flew, and Icarus only typifies the

eternal longing of mankind to fly in the air. The transmutation of metals is still but a Sunday newspaper silly season fact.

But, when you come to think it over calmly, is it true after all that man's flying ability is so much in advance of his ability to turn brass into gold? I know of several pieces of jewelry that have quite a respectable appearance of gold. They stand all the eye tests. It is only when the acid is applied to them that they turn black, and are known for what they are—plated brass. That is pretty good commercial transmutation of metals. Many men have been glad to buy gold bricks, and have been happy and satisfied in their bargains until the plating wore off. So transmutation has kept fairly in step with flying. I am not sure that transmutation and flying are not about neck and neck. This is a wonderful age!

Of course, it is beautiful to see one of those great white man-birds rise from the earth like a monstrous gull and soar; but a well made piece of fake gold jewelry is also fair to look upon—until the brass shows through and the thing turns green. But, of course, no one but a ninny accepts plated brass for pure gold. All of us, however, accept the conquest of the air as finally accomplished, so there can be no doubt that it is. My neighbor tells me so enthusiastically every time a newspaper offers an aviation prize. He was quite sure of it when \$10,000 was offered, and when \$25,000 was the figure he was more than positive. If some newspaper would but offer a prize of \$100,000 I might believe it myself, but I am a conservative. Like most of the world I am only sure that a thing is a success when it earns real money, but I am not satisfied to admit the conquest of the air for only \$10,000 or \$25,000. When some airman wins a prize of \$100,000 I will admit that man has finally overcome all difficulties, and that he is as much at home in the air as the birds are. I will admit it, even if his flyable awning turns turtle the next day and crushes him to atoms. I will admit that the air is conquered.

But I won't go up in an aeroplane.

HINTS FOR AVIATORS

By TERRELL LOVE HOLLIDAY

NEVER fly into a rage.

The aviator should always take care not to land in a strange lady's lap.

Lady aviators will find that the most suitable headdress for a sky sail is a blue sailor.

It is considered bad form for a lady to fly into a gentleman's arms without an invitation.

The rumor that balloon sleeves would be revived by feminine aeroplane enthusiasts is unfounded.

The highball remains the favorite beverage of the aeronaut, and wing collars will be in greater favor than ever this season. They will be worn with batwing ties.

Don't be reckless. A live motorist is better than a dead aeronaut, even if he doesn't get as many press notices.

When buying an aeroplane, to avoid lawsuits, be sure you are (W) right and then go ahead.

Learn to detect and avoid the treacherous "hot air" currents.

Because a man says you are a bird of a girl, don't fly to the conclusion that he is deeply smitten. He may be merely referring to your aeronautic feats.

Don't soar too high on a mere flight of fancy. Someone might call you down.

Don't be conceited. You may be a "highflier" today and a "bird with a broken pinion" tomorrow.

To answer, "Oh, this is so sudden," and hold up your lips to be kissed when a man asks you to fly with him, is out of date. The proper thing now is to counter with the question, "Aeronautically or matrimonially?"

An aeronaut has no right to resent being called a flighty person.

The sky sailor frequently reaches the "mansions in the sky" by taking too quick a drop toward the Other Place.

Unlike the spiritual leader to whom the title was formerly applied, the modern "sky pilot" is not to be taken as a guide to the celestial realms, even though he seems to be going in that direction.

THE FOLLY OF CRAVEN

By JOHN HENLEY ROSS

"**T**HAT fellow Craven has a nasty temper!" said Wheeler, stopping by Romaine's easel. "Thought he would bite when I spoke to him."

"That's strange, isn't it?" said Romaine slowly. He was a black-haired, piratical chap, good-natured and full of laughter. Wheeler was a loungeur—a man that went from easel to easel carrying a vaudeville joke of antiquity to each. He was crude and not popular.

Romaine painted a stroke or two with an exaggerated deliberation.

"What did you say?"

"Me? Said his sketch was a peach, and he snarled like a mad dog—just yapped. Rottenest thing he's done this year."

"Just stale," said Romaine. "It touches the temper generally."

Wheeler, seated cross-legged on the ground nibbling grass stems, looked up grinning and bit off a juicy extremity.

"The old man," he said, "takes more than an ordinary interest in that Canadian girl."

Romaine backed away from his canvas, regarding it with critical scrutiny; he thrust his brushes through the thumb hole of his palette and placed the palette on the ground. Then he felt in several pockets for pipe and tobacco.

"Rats!" he said over the burning match.

"Oh, all right," replied Wheeler in the manner of one sure enough to concede a point. "I suppose you'll say Jimmy Craven isn't more than ordinarily interested in a girl over on the

Island, and that she doesn't jolly him to beat the band."

"Students' gossip!"

"Lord, that isn't gossip! It's truth. Everybody knows it. She pets him one minute and snubs him the next; then says, 'Here, doggie,' and he goes wagging his tail."

Romaine struck another match to his pipe and said nothing, while Wheeler got to his feet, beating the grass from his clothes.

"There's the old man going to roast my sketch," he said. "Craven's next. So long."

Young Mr. Craven, a field and a fence beyond, had been working very hard all winter—morning and afternoon, life class and frequently in the evening as well. The old man, wisest of teachers and best of friends, had warned him against overdoing it.

But Craven, contrary to expectations, came through the season without showing the strain, and at once followed the old man to the country. The change from inside to outside work was grateful; his face had taken on a coppery brown from the sun as had his right hand and the thumb of his left; and he considered himself still fresh and going strong. But at night, when everyone put on white clothes and gathered in the studio to sing ragtime and grand opera, Jimmy sat to one side, smoking and nodding.

On this day that foretold the coming of autumn, when Craven was working on a twenty-five-thirty and the old man was only a field away at Wheeler's easel, it suddenly came to him that things were not as right as they should be.

Well he knew that when sketches went wrong the values must be out. He felt strangely disinclined to search for and correct the offending tones and was, at the same time, conscious that he did not care. He knew exactly what the old man would say about it and exactly how he would stand while saying it—hands in pockets, head thrust forward and deep set eyes smiling narrowly. And he would be "let down easy."

As he stepped back to view his handiwork a wave of disgust passed through him, of dismay and helpless discouragement. With a sudden full arm swing his canvas was hurtled down the cliff into the sea. More deliberately he packed palette and brushes and set off across the fields, unmindful of the sensation his action had created among the students by whom the old man was surrounded.

He had at first no notion of whither he was going nor of what he was to do. Eventually he brought up at the studio for just long enough to leave his traps and to note the Canadian girl working under the skylight. He set forth again walking in a cloud of bitter thoughts, craving some sort of consolation. Following blindly the subconscious yearning of his heart, he made for it, boarding the ferry that ran to the Island.

Broad-verandaed was the house and cool looking in its shade of trees. On the piazza were many people. It was her brother who saw and greeted him first. For her own part she looked him over critically.

"Why, Jimmy, you tramp!" she exclaimed. "Have you paint on your hands?"

She held her own flutteringly extended.

"I forgot my painting duds," said Craven. "I'm sorry."

"Oh, we can make allowances for the artistic temperament," the brother cut in busily. Craven ignored him; he had her hand and spoke in a lowered voice.

"I want to see you. Can't you come somewhere with me?"

"How can I?" she asked with a motion that indicated the others.

"Come anyway," he insisted. "I don't bother you often, and today I want you—"

"I can't," she said, turning away. The brother pushed a chair toward him.

"Well, how's art?"

"Fine," said Craven mechanically, his eyes turned to where she sat, his ears listening for her voice. He wondered what she was laughing at. Such spontaneous girlish laughter. And what that special young-old man, whose face was barren of intelligent expression, could have said to amuse her.

"Good," he heard her brother saying. "How about the class? Many good workers?"

"A good many," said Craven slowly. Her eyes wrinkled so quaintly when she laughed; and her voice went so high and clear when she exclaimed, as she was doing now in a series of little shrieks.

Presently he found himself going down hill accompanied by blue devils and black. He would never exhibit. And art was not for him. He brought up again at the studio and from force of habit washed his brushes. For the same reason he hauled out his picture and looked at it with a grunt of disgust. Only the day before he had received with satisfaction the old man's congratulations; today he could see no good in it. He clattered it back to its corner and turned to face the Canadian girl. He had little sympathy for women who tried to paint. The few who succeeded, he was wont to say, were odd, sexless beings whom he did not care to know. The Canadian girl as she raised her head and let her gaze rest upon him seemed very tender and womanly and strong. That much he was aware of. He did not know that all the dumb pain of disappointment was reflected in his face. The girl understood and felt the helplessness of his despair. She knew, too, that it came from overwork and would in due time pass, and that he had forgotten that progress in the craft was like a rising tide; the waves of elation might

break and recede to depression, but the flood crept higher and higher. The girl could see this clearly. She had been observing during a number of years spent in the schools and studios this spirit of agony and despair that from time to time seized one or another of the students. Their struggles with and against it reminded her of nothing so much as of a story she had read of the "dead who were not dead"—of the impotent frenzy of the wretches who cast themselves at the walls of sliding sand while their fellows sat about observing them with stoic indifference. She saw it all so clearly and was thrilled with so keen a sympathy, as she was filled with a sympathy for Craven and a wish to help him.

He had again pulled out his canvas and was rummaging for a palette knife. She knew the meaning of that and also that the canvas he was about to destroy merited the praise of the old man.

"Don't," was all she said.

He astonished her by his docility. He dropped the knife, straightened up and thrust his hands into his pockets, while she turned again to her work. Presently he followed her, judging what she was doing in an inverse ratio to that in which he held his own. He watched her silently; his eye followed her unhesitating hand, wandered from the canvas it played over to his own, face to the wall, disgraced. He moved to it, picked up the first palette within reach, mixed a tone, and poised the brush undecidedly.

"I hate to bother you, Mr. Craven," said the Canadian girl, "but could you help me just a moment?"

He was not pleased at the interruption. However he was met by a question concerning which he had theories, well thought out and expressible. It gave him pleasure to expound them and by the time he had finished he felt better.

"Is that clear?"

"Quite," said the girl gravely, though her gray eyes smiled. "It's a great help. It's just like the old man. He stimulates one so."

"Why," said Craven almost genially,

"it does me good just to have him swear at me."

"He did at me once—in Paris. I had a studio and he used to come in to criticize."

"He must have been mad!"

"No-o," said the girl reminiscently, "he was pleased, I think."

Thereafter came a pause. The girl who had for some time been seated ended the silence with a sigh.

"Do you ever get discouraged?" she asked, tracing patterns in the mixed paint on her palette. "I do," she continued before Craven could reply, "but I always know it comes from overwork. Then I stop and frivel. It makes one blue, though. Doesn't it you?"

"Indigo," said Craven.

The girl resumed the tracing of patterns. Then she wiped her hand on her apron.

"I am tired," she said, "and you're not fit to work. Let's sail down to the Point and see those fine old trees; there'll be a full moon in the afterglow."

Craven hesitated. His first inclination was to make some excuse. A counter spirit urged him to go. He yielded and fared forth to the boat yard.

This was the period of talk, a give and take of questions and answers that outlasted the time afloat. On the Point they found the old man, painting frenziedly to catch the moonrise. He was mellow in spirit, like old wine, and beamed upon them.

"Somebody," he said to the girl, "wasted a very good canvas." He laughed noiselessly, his head thrust forward and eyes narrowing. These little things were no longer tragedies to him. "But tomorrow afternoon," he continued, "friend Thompson and I start to Green Hill for a week's fishing and Craven is coming. You understand, Craven; three o'clock at the Main Street wharf." He was strapping his easel as he spoke. "Good night," he said, "and not a brush in the boat."

The girl looked after him. "Bless his heart," she said, with an odd note

in her voice. Craven felt that he should understand its meaning. It seemed something that he had dreamed or imagined but he could not place it.

The sun had gone down though the moon was not yet strong to overcome the afterglow. Little chameleon waves danced purple and gold and lavender; the mainland was blurred and indistinct, burning here and there an early light. A bittern boomed somewhere in the night and a smell of marsh and mud rose upon the air. By degrees the moon gained power and cut a path across the water. This was the time of silence. The girl had her own thoughts; Craven brooded over the tiller and it was not until the boat slid into the dock that he spoke.

"We shall be late for dinner."

"Yes," was all she said.

He met her again next morning. It was a day of bright northwest weather and Craven was at peace with himself and the world. His greeting was acknowledged by the slightest of head tip-pings. After momentary astonishment he laughed.

"Why, I wonder if she's Irish?" he said aloud.

"They're all Irish if it comes to that," said Romaine behind him. "I'm going swimming. Are you with me?"

II

ONE by one Craven had seen the students depart, each after his kind; this one stealing away quietly, that one with a great blowing of trumpets. Lastly the old man had gone. Craven was at the depot to see him off, as was also the Canadian girl. Craven understood that she was waiting, under her physician's orders, for cold weather before returning to town.

The old man was full of sage counsel, encouragement and praise. "You will not," he finished, in telling Craven good-bye, "throw many more canvases over the cliff." Then he had turned to the girl. When Craven, who had drawn to one side, looked round again the train was moving and she

had gone. She kept the distance she had gained, walking ahead of him through the village and on toward the shore.

Theirs had been a strangely intermittent friendship. If he needed her help or sympathy he found it readily extended. At such times they met and touched only to separate, it seemed, immediately. And while Craven hardly paused to consider it he was conscious that if they had ceased to touch, if he had made a call upon her and not met with a response, he would have been bitterly disappointed.

Now December had come with cold. Heavy clouds, lead-colored and gray, hung close down to the brown earth. A sharp nor'easter clattered about the old building, biting at the loose ends, wrenching off and whirling skyward the least secure. Now and again a volley of sleet pellets rattled against the skylight.

As Craven, who had been varnishing a canvas, stepped back from the easel, the Canadian girl came into the room. She nodded to him brightly and busied herself in making a place on the crowded table for the packages she carried. The packages disposed of, she drew some letters from her muff.

"I stopped for the mail," she said, handing Craven his share. Already he had recognized one of the square gray envelopes, of which it had been his fortune to receive so few.

"Thanks," he said eagerly.

The Canadian girl, deep in her letter, merely nodded. Craven beneath the skylight hesitated. Miserlike, his instinct was for solitude. He slit the envelope carefully. "Dear Jimmy—I know you will be— My engagement to—" The page became a blur, his throat tightening and choking. The letter crushed in his hand. He saw nothing, was conscious of no connected thought nor feeling.

The Canadian girl did not look up as he passed to the stairs. The road was frozen into ruts and hillocks, and the gaunt trees on either side swayed shiveringly with a rattling of dry branches. He bent to the gale, head-

ing for the shore on the far side of the village. It seemed that he was in a dream, from which he would presently awake. Otherwise he was aware of nothing save the biting wind and the sleet in his face. Bound nowhere, he struggled on desperately. His brain seemed numb and dormant, refusing to accept the blow that subconsciously hammered at it. Simultaneously he was bracing himself to receive it. Nearer the shore the strength of the gale increased. He was near the spot, he suddenly noted, where he had flung his canvas the summer before. Strangely enough, it was the Canadian girl recollection of the incident brought to mind. Remembrance awakened, details of that day trooped in, marshaled by a dominant vision of the Canadian girl. In the same charge incident followed incident until there was hardly a week or day of the late summer and fall unrecorded. At once he knew that he was very cold and the desolation of sea and land, chill in the coming night, smote him like a dirge. He hurried away from it, his feet racing one against the other and swinging him forward at a rapid gait. He felt himself, free once more, to be going home.

The studio was lighted by a fitful glow that rose and fell behind the curtains, sending warmth and cheer out into the gray twilight.

"You must be frozen," said the Canadian girl. "We'll have some tea in a minute."

The long disused fireplace had been cleared out and logs burned on the

rusted dogs; above them hummed a kettle that had formerly done duty as a still life. Craven took off his overcoat and alternately thrust his feet to the blaze. Sleet was pelting the skylight in ringing volleys, and the wind devils shrieked and howled between the gables. Somewhere out in the bay a steam siren was going and fog horns tooted weirdly.

"It must be thick outside," said Craven. "I'm glad I'm not going down to the sea in ships."

The Canadian girl threw another log on the fire, and poured some water on the tea.

"I wanted to tell you," she said, speaking from out a cloud of steam. "As his friend and mine I know you will be interested. I am going to marry the old man—*my* old man now."

He hung poised, his tongue refusing speech. For the second time his world was falling about his ears, and in this the first was engulfed and forgotten. He could hear the booming of fog horns and siren above the roar of the wind, and nearer, more intimately, the rattle of shutters and the rustle and scrape of snow on glass. He saw the distorted shadows dance on the wall, the flickering flames that cast them, and the girl, still holding the teapot and kettle, miles and miles away, smiling into the embers.

He straightened up and held out his hands.

"I know you are going to be very happy," said Jimmy Craven.



HEWITT—Does the climate agree with your wife?
JEWETT—That's more than I'd expect of any climate.

A PHILOSOPHER'S MUSINGS

By HARRY KEMP

THE truth of today is the lie of yesterday, and it will be the paradox of tomorrow.

At the final analysis, all one gets out of life is board and room and a sense of achievement.

MEN are as bad as they dare to be, women as good.

NOWADAYS, to become famous, one must have a press agent, a valet, an amanuensis and a mistress.

IN many a marriage, as soon as the home is established Duty enters at the door and Love flies out at the window.

You can't make truth out of a lie by standing the lie on its head.

TIME is *not* money—it cannot be hoarded; it must be spent, whether one will or not.

If religion is the consolation of the soul, then art is the consolation of the intellect, and love, of the heart.



LOVE is just one damn fool after another.



OR, again—love is wanting what we fear we can't get.

A DINNER TABLE STORY

By HELEN TALBOT KUMMER

MRS. PETER DALZELL prided herself upon the *entrain* of her dinner parties, and her reputation as a hostess was the reputation of positive wizardry in the choosing of guests and menu.

Mrs. Dalzell was as careful in the placing of her name cards as she was in the selection of her entrées and the vintage of her wines; for she rated the one with the other.

As she unfolded her napkin on this soft May night and glanced about her, it was with the satisfaction of a general who sees his forces well marshaled.

The dining room was a big one and somber, with tapestried squares of dark green and bronze and purple, set above its paneling of black Flemish oak. The chairs, high-backed and claw-footed, appeared each one imbued with the dignity of a throne, while in the vast richness of the apartment the dozen people who made up the party seemed marooned, as it were, about the island of the round oak dining table.

Mrs. Dalzell, looking over an agreeable blur of pale purple orchids and tall gold candelabra, was flanked and confronted by distinguished people, witty people, people who meant something in the world socially, mentally or artistically.

Among the guests her eye singled out with a certain complacency a lean, bronzed man, hawk-eyed and with black hair silvering at the temples—a man with a look of vigor and force, almost of roughness about him, which in some way set him apart from those sleek diners.

He was a brilliant writer, an indefatigable traveler, and had at this time

just returned to New York from Rio de Janeiro, and was departing the following day for Norway. Mrs. Dalzell knew that his presence at any dinner table was to be regarded by his hostess as an achievement, and plumed herself upon having caught him, as it were, between flights.

She followed his glance, traveling in secret observation from one to the other of the faces about him, until it crossed her own, and leaned toward him with a smile.

"Does New York seem most like the jungle or the desert?" she asked. "Or is it, after all travel and all adventure, the hub of the universe still?"

Halworth's keen face lightened into a smile.

"New York, like the jungle and the desert, has its lions," he answered; "and to the cosmopolite life is a wheel indeed, but without any hub."

As he spoke, a woman sitting opposite him lifted her eyes as though startled at the sound of his voice, and looked at him searchingly, breathlessly.

"Your books show that you are a wanderer, and your hub the place of the moment," she said quickly. "Tell us what you really think of Brazil, Mr. Halworth."

As she asked the question she leaned a little forward across the orchid-decked table; and as she did so, a curious pendant attached to a thin gold chain swung out from beneath the laces of her dress, almost, as it seemed, by design.

Halworth's eyes rested upon it for a moment with an odd, arrested expression, then were raised observingly to her face.

"What I really think," he said

slowly, "is unfit for publication. Privately, and out of the fullness of my own personal experience, I would advise anyone to give the country a wide berth. It is full of yellow fever and treachery."

"So bad as that?" said his questioner. "At any rate, you must concede that the language is exquisite."

Halworth shrugged his shoulders slightly. "Yes," he said, "the natives say it is a language in which to speak to God and women. You do not know Brazil?"

His listener shook her head slowly. "Only Brazilians," she answered, "and one in particular, who, by the way, will be in New York soon, and who was so eloquent about his country that he roused my interest. That was in London."

As she spoke her gaze envisaged Halworth again with the same searching look, and, as though involuntarily, her hand touched the pendant at her throat.

"I know you culled a whole sheaf of romances in Brazil," Mrs. Dalzell broke in before Halworth could answer. "Won't you tell us, before you give it to your editors and your public, just a tiny one for the glory of my little party and the edification of Lady Alford?"

Halworth considered a moment, and his eye went again to the strange pendant that was adorning the neck of a countess of Alford. The thing was merely a piece of turquoise matrix roughly broken, and upon its surface appeared in gold inset what had evidently once been a coat of arms, though now the slightly jagged break had separated it nearly in the middle, leaving the points of a crown, a bird's wing and a Latin word or two alone visible. The fragment had been pierced, and swung from a threadlike chain of gold.

Halworth's quick eye took in the marriage ring which was the only other ornament of his *vis-a-vis*, her simplicity in this respect contrasting oddly with the splendor of her white velvet dress and the magnificent ivory-colored laces that webbed it.

She was a slender woman, with delicate features and a grave, rather proud mouth, which would have been cold but

for its bloom. She had been in New York less than a month, and together with Halworth was one of those lions who enlivened the jungle—or the desert—of Gotham parties. In two weeks' time she expected Lord Alford to join her from New Mexico, where for six months past he had been with a party of other Englishmen who were interested in a silver mine there that promised great things. Incidentally, Lord Alford had "done" the West, from the traveler's, not the financier's, point of view, while Lady Alford, moving from one great English country house to another, grave-eyed, listless, a little pale, had finally gone to London for a great mask ball given there early in April, and at which she had promised to be present before her departure to meet Lord Alford in New York.

Halworth looked at her for a moment longer consideringly, and as he did so her hand went again to the pendant and thrust it out of sight.

"I shall tax your credulity," he said, turning to his hostess after an instant of scarcely perceptible hesitation, "but I believe that you would be interested in a little experience of mine while I was living in Rio. Forget for a moment that I am a romancer, and believe in this as a curious human experience. It is quite true."

There was a little murmur of assent and anticipation. The men gazed into their wine glasses contentedly, mellowly receptive of entertainment both mental and physical; the women let fall the ball of conversation, and glanced with envious interest at the narrator.

But Lady Alford, propping her chin upon her hand and neglecting the entrée upon her plate, lifted her beautiful eyes and looked steadily, half challengingly, into the face of the man across the table.

But Halworth, if he noticed the look, appeared successfully unconscious of it as he began to speak.

"Personality," he said slowly, "is a fascinating study, and, to my mind, is the essence of beauty or power or success, for it contains the very elements of all these things and of many others besides."

He paused, and his gaze, under drooped, indifferent lids, fastened itself upon the listening face of Lady Alford, as though to mark there the beat of every pulse in her white throat, the flicker of a muscle in her red lip.

Behind him from an open window a gust of fresh, moist air came suddenly, laden with the scent of lilacs, heavy in the soft May night.

"It was about a month ago, just before my departure from Brazil for New York," he went on, "that I was invited to a dinner party given by a wealthy coffee merchant of Rio to celebrate the return home of his only son, who for a year past had been living in London representing his father's interests in that place.

"He—the son—was a most brilliant and fascinating man, and this, coupled with his great wealth, had opened to him many London portals.

"My first impression as I shook hands with him was of a remarkable atmosphere of force and attraction; yet at the same time I felt that if this magnetism had not compelled my liking of the man from whom it emanated I should have feared and avoided it.

"Here was a creature all personality, all electric vibration. Although he was barely thirty, there were yet lines in his face which told of an older experience, and his gray eyes, intense and compelling—especially to me, were full of that essence that we call charm or virility or magnetism, but which we have never been able to analyze, and for which, equally, we have no real definition. He had the straight, thin features of an Arab—the bronze skin of his father's race; but an English mother had given him his strange gray eyes and a slow smile that was sometimes singularly sweet."

Halworth paused for a moment, and shifted his position. About him the subdued service of the table continued uninterrupted. Opposite him, Lady Alford leaned suddenly back in her chair. The soft candle light all about her flickered in exquisite shadings over the white velvet of her dress, and threw into strong relief the dark gold of her

hair and the purplish blue of her eyes. In her throat the watcher saw that a quick, irregular pulse had begun to beat.

"I saw Da Ferrera frequently after that first meeting," Halworth went on, "and hearing that he intended to leave for New York about the same time as myself, I cultivated him, expecting to see him here. He was continually in the gayest social life of the place—in the clubs, at balls and on the race track. He was comparatively young, as I say, yet his Southern origin and his large experience of life abroad made him seem much older than he really was. Or was it perhaps some quality from within, some experience of the soul, with which the passing of life had nothing to do?

"At any rate, he was much liked, for though he had a reckless, devil-may-care spirit, he was laughter loving, and open-handed to a fault. Yet there were moments when, under all his gaiety, he seemed to me worn and restless.

"It was some days after my first encounter with the younger Da Ferrera that he was invited to join a jaguar hunt which a mutual friend was getting up for my benefit. He said I would find it better sport than hunting editors in New York. Da Ferrera accepted the invitation, and a day or two later we set out.

"Hunting in Brazil means impenetrable forests filled with snakes, morasses and jaguars. It means camping out at night under heavy dews, your every movement watched out of the surrounding darkness by savage eyes that glow like carbuncles in the night. It means danger, but it also means good sport. We had very good sport, I remember, the second day; and toward evening we made our camp in an open spot, and sat around the fire, smoking and talking and listening to the thousand night noises that fill the great forests of a hot-climated country.

"Presently Da Ferrera, without saying anything, got up and sauntered away. I had been watching him for some time as he sat smoking in silence, struck with his appearance and with his look. He had made a vivid picture in the firelight, his black hair falling disordered over his forehead, his strange eyes sparkling

somberly. He was in riding dress, with a black coat, and this set off his agile figure and pale bronze skin to perfection. In his belt was stuck a long knife. You will laugh at my eye for details when I tell you that I even noticed and remember a curious fob that dangled from his watch—a square of turquoise matrix, with his crest set upon it in gold, like an exquisite mosaic.”

As though from a dream, Lady Alford lifted her head, and the half-remembrance in her eyes, as they rested upon Halworth, leaped into sure and startled recognition. Yet she had never seen his face before. Only his voice she had never forgotten. On her breast, securely hidden, the strange pendant stirred with the stirring of her heart.

But no one thought of the pendant. Few, indeed, had seen it. Yet the diners at Mrs. Dalzell's table were unaccountably arrested from the careless amusement of the hour by Halworth's recital and its half-heard yet insistent note, as though he had a message and were trying to deliver it through the medium of his story. He paused to help himself from a dish which the footman was holding, and then went on evenly:

“We had been sitting around the fire for about a quarter of an hour, when some unexplainable feeling of uneasiness about Da Ferrera made me leave the circle, and after some hesitation and internal argument with myself, follow in the direction he had taken. In a few minutes I saw him in the deepening twilight, lying outside of the protective light of our campfire, prone upon the ground. His face was hidden on his arm.

“I stood for a moment awkwardly, feeling as impertinent as though I had pried unbidden into some sorrow that I had no business to know; yet, even at that moment of his aloofness and grief, the strange attraction which drew Da Ferrera's mind and mine like a magnet made it difficult to leave him. I drew away, however, and went back to the fire.

“It was some time after that that we were all startled by a crash in the brush, as of some heavy body falling, accom-

panied by a fierce snarling and tearing sound. ‘Good God!’ cried out someone. ‘It's Da Ferrera!’

“When we reached the spot a few hundred yards from us, we saw in the faint star white evening light a confused mass rolling and struggling on the ground among the underbrush. It was Da Ferrera, and clinging to him, with its teeth gripped into his shoulder, rendering his left arm useless, was a great jaguar. The man's other arm was pinned beneath the weight of the beast, and he was making superhuman efforts to release it, and with it the long knife at his belt. To render him any assistance was impossible, for to make a thrust at the jaguar would be to risk stabbing Da Ferrera in that dim light, as he fought and twisted, now uppermost, now under. It makes me thrill yet when I recall his eyes flashing with almost as savage a luster as those of the great beast above him—the gleam of his white teeth through his backdrawn lips and the flow of blood down his cheek from a slight wound there.

“For all his slenderness, he must have been as strong and supple as a leopard, else he could never have kept up the struggle until, after what seemed to us onlookers an eternity, he released his arm and drove the knife home. The great beast rolled off his body, lashing out in all directions, and was dispatched by some of our guides and beaters.

“But Da Ferrera lay quite still. I was the first to reach him, and I took his head on my knee and felt for his heart. He was not dead, but unconscious from pain, and he remained so during the stripping off of his coat and the binding of his wound, which I am afraid was accomplished clumsily enough.

“We carried him to the fire and made him as comfortable as we could on the coats and rugs we had with us, but the wound in his shoulder was an ugly one and we were unable to bring him back to consciousness. We arranged finally that each one of us in turn should keep watch by him for two hours while the others slept. I was to take the first watch, and after I had made my prepa-

rations and unrolled my blanket, I returned to Da Ferrera's side, to find that he had never recovered consciousness, at all, but that he was beginning to burn with fever. It looked like an ugly business. The others stayed with me for a little time, and then, dropping with fatigue, went away and rolled themselves up in their blankets.

"It was past six then, and the black, tropical night was drawing close about us, with the big, bluish stars beginning to burn large in the velvety intenseness of the heavens in a million throbbing points of light.

"Da Ferrera lay as I had last seen him, except that now restless tremors were beginning to shake his frame and an ugly scarlet flush to burn under his dark skin. I went to him and moistened his forehead and lips, but otherwise I could do nothing. To have tried to make our way back toward Rio through those darkening jungles with an unconscious man would have been impossible, and among us we had no one with even the merest knowledge of surgery.

"As I knelt beside him, he murmured, opened his eyes and looked at me. I took his hand and bent over him, looking into the eyes he fastened on mine."

Halworth paused again, and glanced at the woman across the table. Observant, analytical, remorseless in his writings—especially of women—his glance was like the glance of a surgeon at the patient under his scalpel—yet with a gleam of pity.

The eyes of Lady Alford, which had rested stirlessly, forgetfully, on his face, turned aside. She took up her fork bravely, but her mouth had lost its bloom.

"This is the point in my story where you will begin to disbelieve," Halworth went on deliberately. "You will say that I am romancing, according to my trade; so you can take it as fiction or as truth, as you please.

"Da Ferrera, I thought, was delirious when he began to murmur a woman's name, interspersed with wild pleadings hoarse with despair; and again I had the feeling of intruding into the man's sanctuary when he was defenseless to

protect whatever heavy secret his heart might hold; yet, delirious or not, when I looked into his eyes and felt the pressure of his hand, a feeling began to steal over me which I could not shake off. I wanted to release my hand and draw away my eyes. I could do neither. The forest seemed to recede and sway before me; the stars whirled in fiery circles in the sky.

"There succeeded a blank, during which I had consciousness of nothing, except the pressure of the hand holding mine.

"I awoke to a sensation of chill, but not the chill of an autumn twilight in a Brazilian forest. In my nostrils was the familiar, indescribable, unmistakable smell of London streets and London fog—and also the smell of budding things, and of wet, leafing trees as in April. The wooden pavements were black and slimy under foot, as though from a recent spring shower; the long waiting lines of cabs and hansoms stood down the middle of the streets, the horses drooping between their shafts. Dreamily I was aware of the clocks and chimes of London, and that it was near midnight.

"I was standing before a big, old-fashioned house in Grosvenor Square. Carriages were clustered thick about its doors and stretched far down the road, awaiting their occupants. Music sounded from within, and on the curb two ladies, whose jeweled headdresses glistened in the lamplight, were just getting out of their brougham. Da Ferrera stood at my side holding my hand; but instantly he released it, and taking my arm, drew me forward to the door.

"'Come and dance,' he said with a little reckless laugh that had no mirth in it. 'I dance with Death tonight—since I may not dance with Love.'

"At that moment two other carriages set down a group of gaily dressed maskers, the men in motley—in velvet—in armor, the women in the dresses of bygone queens or impossible exquisite peasant girls. All were masked, and their laughter rang full-throated in the chilly April night as they mounted the steps.

"Da Ferrera drew me in their wake, and among them we crossed the threshold and passed in.

"In the dressing rooms there were masks for those who needed them. We put them on, and then in our riding clothes—the clothes in which we had hunted a few hours before, in a Brazilian forest, and in which at that moment we lay prone among its jungles—we went out into the corridor, and on into the ballroom.

"Da Ferrera drew me into a corner, and stood there watching the throng with drawn brows.

"Yet it was a scene charming and gay enough to have held to the exclusion of everything else the attention of anything but a wandering and restless soul, stamped in the image of the body it inhabited, yet projected far from that body through space.

"The maskers, it seemed, had outdone themselves on this occasion both in originality and prodigality, and the result was amazingly brilliant. The ballroom was hung from end to end with tapestries and great canvases, representing a marvelous green-gladed, sun-dappled forest, which must surely have been Arden itself; and against this background, under the wax lights whose glow was as mellow as amber, there moved a glittering pageant of priests and knights, dancers and queens—Richelieu, Cæsar, Robespierre, Napoleon, Salome, Du Barry, Semiramis, Cleopatra—an endless throng, whose most poignant and distinctive figures that have successfully braved the oblivion of the ages were those whose lives had been the most passionate, the most selfish, the most wicked.

"And among them came a woman, who represented Sleep—and she was dressed in thin, silvery, smoke-colored stuff, that melted into purple, its edges embroidered with dark heartsease; and on her breast and in her hands were great clusters of poppies, with heavy, drowsy, flame bright heads."

Down the length of the table a man, listening intently, raised his hand to his mustache to conceal a smile of indulgent amusement, of lazy

tolerance, and bent his head to his neighbor.

"Halworth tells a good story," he said, "but when he establishes so complete an alibi in Brazil this other degenerates into a mere pipe dream, with the details gathered from the newspapers. That ball, and that character of Sleep, were the talk of New York and Paris, as well as of London. The more so, as no one ever found out who Sleep was, for she disappeared before the unmasking. Halworth has read his newspaper clippings to some purpose. Listen."

But Halworth, even had he heard, would have continued unmoved.

"As the woman with the poppies passed us," he went on, "her face not only masked but shrouded in a fold of her gauze almost as though she wore a *yashmak*, Da Ferrera caught his breath and laid a hand heavily on my arm. I saw his eyes gleam, and behind the shelter of his mask I could have thought he flushed and paled.

"He took my arm and drew me through the crowd until we were near her. The woman, momentarily alone, stood just in the doorway of the winter garden, and behind her was the dim, cool place splashed with the scarlet and yellow of masses of exotic bloom.

"Da Ferrera bent and spoke into her ear:

"'You are well disguised,' he said, 'but there is no disguise that the eyes of my love would not pierce. I *knew* that you were here before I saw you, *mia cara*.'

"The woman shrank back for a breath, and her hand went to her heart. I saw her eyes rest on the curious piece of matrix bearing his crest and initials that swung from Da Ferrera's watch, gleaming under the lights.

"'Is it you?' she said. Her lips trembled, and I could see her heart beat in her throat. 'Yet how can it be you—You went to Brazil! I sent you away—for always.'

"Her hands went out a little, unconsciously, toward him as she spoke, and a warm, glad note leaped into her voice—unconsciously, too. I never forgot her voice.

"Da Ferrera's own hand went out as though to meet hers, but midway he withdrew it, and I noticed that he did not touch her, as with a look he drew her into the shadows of the garden behind him.

"I remained immovable, as though in the grasp of some giant thing that controlled my body and my brain as they stood near, half screened by a wall of dark green cactus, whose huge flowers, forced for the revelry of this one night, hung their immense cream white discs against a screen, sending the heavy sweetness of tuberose into the warm air.

"I have come far,' I heard Da Ferrera say, 'through many weary leagues of space—of time—of suffering—only just to look at you once more, only just to be near you and to touch your hand.'

"He paused for a moment, and I saw the look of passion on his mouth. 'You love me,' he said presently, short and quick; 'your eyes cannot deny it, though your lips have done so.'

"With a swift movement he bent his own lips to her hands.

"My lips shall become real—and warm—for this moment—and for you,' he said; and as though by a supreme effort of his will, I saw the color flow slowly across their ashy pallor under the line of his mask.

"At that moment there were voices near at hand, and a flutter of invading maskers.

"The woman, starting to her feet, led Da Ferrera down the fragrant aisles of the garden and I followed them mechanically. In a moment they entered the library, where an old silver lamp swung from the ceiling was burning dimly, showing walls lined with books. High up was a great stained window, through which the moonlight poured in changing colors that filtered in shifting bars of watery blue and flowing red upon the bare polished floor. On the hearth the wood fire was dying in ruby embers.

"The woman stood in the moonlight and looked up at Da Ferrera, the poppies in her hand pressed tightly, unconsciously against her breast in a great blotch of color.

"Take off your mask,' she whispered.

He raised his hand and tore it off eagerly, looking down at her with glowing eyes and a face so transfigured that the man as I had known him seemed submerged in this new tenderness—this vast self-forgetfulness and longing.

"I have come so far,' he said again, and in his voice was a sudden, breathless quality, as though he beat with frenzied hands against the resistless might of advancing time. 'The minutes go so fast, and I cannot stay—only long enough to say I love you—I love you. I am going away on a long, long journey.' He spoke as though he had been running.

"But the woman locked her hands suddenly about his arm. 'You frighten me,' she said; 'you are so strange to-night. I do not understand—I sent you away. Ah, did you come back to show me how weak I am—how weak—' Despairingly she dropped into a chair and hid her face against its cushioned back. 'I love you so,' she said.

"There was stillness in the room for a moment, as though some great Presence had come there suddenly; then Da Ferrera bent over her, and there was a sob in his voice.

"You will think this is a dream,' he said, 'some day.' He took the thin piece of matrix that hung from his watch and with a strong effort broke it in two and put the broken piece in her hand.

"It is a symbol,' he said, 'of our love. It is broken like this stone, but some day the two pieces will be joined—just as you and I, dear—some day, somewhere—will come together again. Remember, sweet—as a consolation—that so surely as that stone is joined again, you and I will find one another, though we cross eternity to do it.'

"He put his arm about her and drew her to her feet.

"I cannot stay any longer,' he said. 'Will you kiss me before I go?'

"As he bent his lips to hers, I was conscious again of that intangible Presence in the room, as of something majestic—beautiful—solemn; and their kiss in its shadow was passionate and sad, yet almost joyous, too, as though they were sure of something. Yet the woman was

sobbing as she turned from him and threw herself once more against the cushions of the chair.

"But Da Ferrera crossed the room with a steady step and laid his hand upon my arm."

Over the guests at Mrs. Dalzell's dinner party a curious silence had fallen; and one woman there pressed the hot tears back upon her eyeballs under her downcast lids.

"I remember that a hand was laid on my shoulder," said Halworth after a moment, "and I turned as though released from a spell, to look into the face of a man in our hunting party who had come to relieve my watch. I was kneeling before Da Ferrera, holding his hand. He was dead."

Lady Alford had not spoken or moved. All about her Mrs. Dalzell's dinner guests, relieved from the tension of Halworth's story, were felicitating him upon his imaginative powers, or starting among themselves discussions as to the probabilities of such an occurrence—of the possibilities of the hypnotic projection of an obsession or a desire upon another's mind being of sufficient strength combined with will power to transport

the soul to a distance and materialize it in its earthly form. Others declared that Halworth had had a vivid dream, and all secretly regarded his story as a clever invention.

They had no leisure to observe the pale cheeks of the one woman who sat silent among them. She was always a little pale, a little cold—an English-woman.

But in her heart, Halworth's message rang like a knell: "He is dead!" She wanted to wring her hands together and weep.

Instead, being a puppet of the world, she gathered up her gloves and fan when the other women gathered theirs, and left the room with head held high to ease the knot that swelled in her throat.

A little later, as she went to her carriage, Halworth followed her.

"I knew that I should find you," he said abruptly, yet gently, and as *He* would have wished, some day, somewhere, give you this."

With a quick movement he laid something in her palm, stepped back and was gone. When she could see in the dim light, she looked at it. It was the other half of the broken pendant on her breast.



"**H**ERE," said the editor; "you use too many words. You say, 'He was poor, but honest.' You have only to say that he was honest."

Again you say, 'He was without money and without friends.' Simply say that he was without money."



HOWELL—It is to the young men of today that we must look for our salvation.
POWELL—You talk like an old maid.



THE HERMIT OF MALEA

By FRANCIS HAFFKINA SNOW

CAPE MALEA is a bold and ragged promontory in the Mediterranean, inaccessible from the sea save at one spot, where a hermit had built himself a hut.

The hermit was a very old man, with a long gray beard falling to his waist. The little plot of land not actually precipitous near his hut he cultivated in terraces; he had, besides, a small herd of goats and a few fowls. From time to time steamers and yachts touched his retreat and left him stores of biscuits and oil. They would blow the steam whistle and lower a boat; the old hermit would, at this signal, come to the shore and bring whatever produce he could spare and leave it, retiring forthwith to a cave close by. The boat's crew would take the things, leaving in their place what they themselves had brought in exchange, and row away. Sometimes it would be months before another vessel came.

The hermit was wont to stand for hours at the edge of the promontory gazing out toward the sea's low boundary curve. His eyes were lackluster and his garment squalid; his beard was unkempt and matted. Behind him his hair, long as a woman's, blew straight out in the fresh sea breeze which moaned strangely in the crevices of the high cliffs behind.

One day, after a lapse of many weeks, a sail again appeared on the horizon. It was now spring; he knew neither the day nor the month but the change was tangible. Long had the demons of winter howled and screamed and thundered like an unholy band of evil djinns against the rocky fastnesses of the hermit's home; long had the frothing

wolves' jowls of the upheaving waves foamed and snapped impotently below, furious at the perpetual frustration of their ravening desires. Sometimes in the whirling gray mist heaven and sea seemed united, welded into a vast terrifying whole; a gray chaos swirled and flurried about like a world in the throes of atomic evolution; then the dull leaden tone of the hollow sky would dawn opaquely forth again, and the long, regular, restless sweep of the greenish sea would again stretch forth to the hermit's apathetic gaze.

Now the sun was warm and brilliant; the sea scintillated like an enormous jewel of many facets; the sky was one vast blue smile. Past the cliffs extending out on either side, the sea gulls, squawking raucously, flapped in rhythmic circlings of gleaming white, exulting in light and sunlit space, in the salt perfume of the sea and the warm velvet of the primaveral air. Far off on the horizon the dot of white seemed to hang suspended between sea and sky. The hermit watched it grow as the distance lessened, and the burnt-out pupils of his sunken eyes, as he watched, took on an unwonted light.

Like a white swan the ship sailed majestically on, and luffing up in the steady breeze, lay to a considerable distance off. Then a boat put off from the side and slowly pulled toward the rocky shore. The hermit, shading his eyes with his hand, saw that it contained two men; he could make out the rhythmic bend and heave of the rower's back and the motionless blot of blue in the stern. As the boat grounded on the pebbly shingle below, he did not, according to his usual custom, disap-

pear in the cave or seek to effect the usual exchange of commodities. Perhaps some intuition told him that it would be superfluous; perhaps he had found the long winter's isolation upon this solitary cape irksome at last, and was fain to set eyes on a human face again. But who would seek to penetrate the mental processes of an eremite? Slowly and painfully, supporting himself upon his ironshod staff, he hobbled down the rocky path leading to the shore.

It was a young man whom he met as he reached the low half-crescent of the diminutive strip of beach, a mere boy. With a single glance he noted the glowing, yet delicate beauty of the face, the picturesque yachting costume of finely woven blue, the slenderness of the graceful figure. Already the sailor who had brought his single passenger ashore had pushed off from the pebbly, sloping beach, and was slowly pulling back toward the yacht that lay, idly rocking, on the long sea swell in the near offing. The creaking of the oars in the rowlocks, delayed by space, came tardily to the ear after the rower's motion had already been accomplished. Unused to speech, the eremite stood mutely before the stranger, asking nothing, exacting nothing, awaiting the other's pleasure. His lackluster gaze was not even directed upon the new arrival's face, but fell beyond upon the retreating skiff and the anchored smack awaiting its return.

The youth surveyed him curiously.

"Art thou he whom they call the Hermit of Malea?" he asked in liquid Italian. His voice was soft and gentle, almost like a woman's.

"*Si, signore,*" replied the hermit humbly. "*Son'io.*" His accent was that of a non-Italian, a Greek, perhaps.

"I have come to dwell with thee for a while," went on the youth calmly. "I am weary of living yonder"—he cast a graceful, supple gesture out toward the departing skiff—"in the world. I am seeking peace and quiet. Wilt thou take me in? I will pay thee well."

"I have no need of money here," he rejoined. "But I will take you in, if so

be you care to live the beast's life you will find with me." He surveyed in silence for a moment the lad's handsome face, glowing with youth and health, plastically perfect in its chiselings and illumined with two great, golden brown eyes, thickly fringed with tawny halos of lash, like the radiations of little stars made tangible. Then, still in silence, he turned about and led the way up the steep, winding incline that brought one to the outjutting promontory ledge above.

II

ALL summer the youth and the hermit lived together upon the ledge, sleeping in the hermit's squalid hut, set back some distance from the promontory's edge. Monotonously the weeks dragged by. At rare intervals a boat came, and an exchange of stores was effected as before. Always the same wide sweep of sky and sea—always the same low undertone of the lapping waters and the thunder and hiss of the ebb and flow—always the same warm sun—infrequently a storm that seemed to tear jagged holes of abysmal depth in the inky shroudings of the skies, stirring up the waters below like a witch's caldron seething with some infernal brew, hissing up as though to storm the very citadels of heaven, and hurling showers of spray against the side of their frail shelter. Time became a mere monotonous succession of natural effects: the golden radiance of the dawn—sunset, when the sinking sun burned low on the water plane, transforming the western confines of their world into a vast wide path, paved with molten jewels and stained crimson as with stagnant pools of blood—night when innumerable stars peopled the silent emptiness of the sky, aglitter and agleam with luminous points like staring eyes, inscrutable as the soul of man.

As the similarity of their condition increased, the species of silent comradeship that had arisen between them deepened and widened. The youth's fine attire was now stained and torn; his

delicate face was deeply tanned; he wore no hat, and his yellow hair grew long, like the hermit's, only with little crinkly waves and lustrous lights, in contrast with the straight, lusterless growth covering the hermit's shoulders. At first he had been strange and morose, lying for hours at the cliff's edge, gazing out over the wide purple stain of the summer sea; and one night the hermit had heard him sobbing, though the lad had thought him asleep at the time. But he asked no question. As he had come to this solitary rock years and years before, fleeing the eyes and the speech of man, so had this unknown boy come to take refuge in the austere silence of his own joyless existence; his griefs and sorrows, if such he possessed, were his own and must be respected. Only, as time went on, he realized that a long forgotten emotion had arisen again from the dregs of his empty heart, and now, all unconsciously to himself, his gaze followed the lad covertly about, and in his blurred eyes there shone intermittently a curious gleam, as of hope and fear commingled in unequal parts.

Little by little the habit of taciturnity which had characterized their relations was broken. In the deep quiet of the balmy summer nights, a quiet broken only by the long, melancholy wash of the moon-silvered sea, they would lie down together, these two creatures in whom the past and present were incarnate, upon the broad, smooth shelf over-arching the dizzy gulf below and watch the minute starry zoophytes dancing here, there, everywhere in the sea, and the glimmering spurs of stellar light trembling in the great hollow void above. And this constant communion with nature together in this wild, isolated spot, far from the haunts of men, brought with it a special comprehension and a special sympathy. The youth became the hermit's friend; so at least, he thought. What he had really become to the hermit he did not even suspect.

Little by little, a word here, a retrospection there, he gleaned the hermit's story. The hermit had been a ship-owner of the Piræus; he had been rich and prosperous in his ventures. But

at the height of his good fortune he had embarked on his ship with all his family, his wife and his two children, his destination Sicily. A frightful tempest had arisen, and they had been wrecked and broken to pieces against this rock. He was the only survivor. Wife, children, merchandise, all was lost. Then he had put on his hermit's robe and taken up his abode upon the cliff, and his heart was dead within him.

His harsh voice neither deepened nor softened as he spoke of the now long past destruction of all his hopes; but the youth felt a strange thrill as he realized the grim flight of years and the inexorable maw of the past which swallows all and leaves nothing but that which would better have been taken, too—memory! And here even sorrow had outgrown itself and lived on in a mere empty husk. His own petty grief and sorrow seemed to shrink away into something less than insignificance in comparison with such a bitterness as this.

And yet, when one is young and intensely human, comparison of one's own greater misfortunes is, of a sooth, but cold comfort at best. As time went on the youth grew restless, and the hermit noted the change with a solicitude which he could not conceal. Now again the lad lay hour long on the bald ledge, watching the impassive sweep of the sea and sky and the misty dimness of the curved horizon. Something rose between them—an insurmountable barrier; the lad was soul sick and yearned for something which he had not. And the hermit was deeply sad, for though he knew not what the thing might be, he was certain that its attainment lay not here, but was inwoven with the old life which the lad had left behind. At night he would lie awake for hours gazing at the boy's young face, pure and sweet of outline, beneath the paly radiance that streamed in through the rough, glazed window from the moonlit sea. Sometimes stifled sobbings came to his ears as he lay there stretched out on his hard pallet feigning sleep, and his old empty heart, wherein the lad's companionship after so many years of solitude had struck again a spark, went out to

the boy in his young sorrow. But he could speak no word of comfort or consolation. Should tottering old age seek to console the heartache of exuberant youth? But when worn out with his sorrow the boy at last fell asleep, the hermit would quietly rise, and taking part of his own rough skins, cover the lad up as tenderly as a mother, and the boy would find the skins 'around him when he woke.

And yet as time went on and the lad's trouble became deeper and more permanent, the hermit finally brought himself one night, as they lay overlooking the shimmering radiance of the nocturnal sea, to the point of asking the other's confidence. Why had he come to the rock? Why had he stayed so long with him, the old hermit? What was the cause of his soul sickness? Why did he not return?

But the youth, weeping bitterly, had refused to answer, and the hermit, very sad, had pressed him no more, and so the weeks dragged on.

Now it was autumn. Here on this barren cliff there was no chemical changes indicative of the moribund year's desuetude. No gold red carpet strewed the ledge; no flaunting beauty bannered the year's retreating form. Only the cliffs seemed barer and bleaker, grimmer, more forbidding, than before; the former soft luminousness of the heavens assumed each day a harder and more metallic sheen; it arched away above them, with a kind of pallid vibration, like an enormous breeze; icily cold, the sun streamed thinly down upon the foaming curls of the slate black waves. A subtle chill permeated the crisp air, and the sea birds now more rarely flapped by the barren crevices of the forbidding cliffs that towered far above the ledge whereon they lay.

What the hermit dreaded now more than he could express with any word finally came to pass.

It had been a dull, unlovely day, obscured by monotonous, creeping mists that rose from some unknown source and slowly glided along the surface of the waters like a vaporous, floating curtain drawn by unseen hands. A storm

was brewing. Overhead the clouds, gray and opaque, seemed massed and concentrated in solid, immovable shapes as though held suspended in some Titanic grip; yet within the blackness one felt an inner agitation, a continual glimmer and gleam, the ferment of colossal forces not visible to the naked eye. A violaceous wrack of smoke thin vapors scurried low over the horizon line at the east. The wind whistled shrilly through the crevices of the precipitous cliffs closing in around the plateau. His coarse robe swirling about him as he walked, his long gray hair tossed and whipped stingingly across his pallid face and into his dull eyes, the hermit made his tottering way down the steep winding path to the beach in quest of the mussels which formed an important element of their frugal fare.

And as before, months ago, so now he found himself face to face again with a human being. The boat which had brought him rocked up and down in the boiling shallows of the agitated sea, awaiting to take him off again. Far off lay a small steam yacht, from whose funnels a long wattled string of black smoke issued, whipped off toward the west by the fresh breeze in a flat, low line. The man was tall and broad-shouldered, firmly knit, physically every inch a man. He was very handsome, in a dark, glowing way, with burning coal black eyes, and youth and virile vigor and animal exuberance of life were exhaled from him, as it were, electrically. He was dressed, the hermit noted, like a *signore*, in yachting flannels of spotless white, white shoes and a yachting cap of blue.

He stopped short in his agile way as the hermit emerged around the elbow of the cliff path out upon the beach.

"*Eccoti, vecchio vulpe!*" he exclaimed.

The hermit's heart swelled big within him—why, he hardly knew.

"What do you here, *signore?*" he asked with a show of courtesy, though a terrible fear, almost a certainty, clutched with steely fingers at his throat, as he awaited the other's answer.

The young man's handsome face suddenly grew dark.

"None of your tricks on me, old Rinaldo Vulpius!" he exclaimed brutally, as before. "You know what I've come for!"

The old man shook his gray old head mutely for all response; a pathetic, unexpressed appeal shone in the deep, sunken eyes of burned-out umber.

"You don't know, eh?" asked the other menacingly. "*Ebbens*, then I'll tell you. I've come for *her!* I know she's here, so don't you try to keep her from me or you'll regret it!"

"For *her!*" repeated the hermit, with a sudden exultant flash of hope springing up within him. "There is no woman here, *signore*; there is only a boy—a *ragazzo*."

"*Ragazzo! Niente!*" growled the man. Suddenly he leaped upon the old man as a tiger springs upon its prey. "*Andiamo—vial!*" he cried, raising his muscular young arm in sudden menace. "Where is she? *Presto!* Quick! *Dove—dove?*"

The hermit, trembling before the hurricane-like energy of the stranger, pointed upward toward the steep cliff path. "He—the boy—is up there, *signore*," he said weakly and quaveringly, "on the ledge. But there is no woman."

The next moment he lay half stunned on the pebbly shore, where the man, with a single wrench of his arm, had hurled him. The rough sailors in the boat—Maltese they were, from their *patois*—laughed and jibed at him as, trembling and shaking in every limb, he rose and tottered up the steep path behind whose bend the newcomer, quick and active as a cat, had already disappeared.

As he approached the summit, he heard a sudden cry which brought him to a standstill in the middle of the path, then the sound of sobs and exclamations in the boy's voice, mingled with the deeper accents of the newcomer and undertoned with the unmistakable sound of many kissings.

"*Federicol Federico miol . . . O, sone contenta che tu sei venuto! O, sono contenta!*"

"*Antonia—carissimal T'ho trovato! Perdono—perdonol!*"

The hermit slowly emerged upon the ledge.

The boy whom he had known as Antonio lay clasped in the young man's arms, his yellow, lustrous head pillowed on the stranger's broad breast; the unambiguous light of perfect happiness shone through the amber luster of his still tear wet eyes. A warm color suffused his sunburned cheeks as he beheld the hermit. Yet even then the hermit did not understand. Only one thought filled his numbed old mind.

"Antonio!" he muttered, stretching out his meager arms toward him. "Antonio—they are taking you away from me—they are taking you away!"

His anguish was intense. Great tears trickled down his furrowed cheeks and across his long gray beard. His fringed mouth trembled and shook as though he were suffering with some strange disorder. His suffering was so palpable that even the stranger was struck by it and coughed loudly to dissimilate his discomfort. Antonio disengaged himself from the other's embrace and slowly approached the old hermit until they stood together face to face. And as he stood there before him, his glowing face, all mantled with blushes, framed in its short waving background of yellow hair, his eyes twin amber stars, his encarnated mouth curved into an arch, confused smile, the hermit at last understood.

"*Una ragazzal!*" he cried in consternation and despair. "*Tu!*"

"*Sì, padre—una ragazzal!*" re-echoed the girl, a mischievous smile creeping across her half-shamed face. "Thou didst never suspect it, *non è vero?*" Then suddenly she kneeled impulsively down upon the bare stone edge, and taking the hermit's trembling hand, pressed it to her lips.

"Thou hast been good to me, *padre!*" she said softly. "Thou hast loved me, I know. But I have been very unhappy—and now I am very happy. Thy blessing, *padre!*"

For what seemed a long time the hermit stood there immovable, as though turned to stone. Perhaps he was thinking of the past, with all its buried hopes; perhaps he was thinking of the present, with its illusive gleams—

who shall penetrate the brain processes of an eremite? Slowly at last the palsied, gnarled old hand rose, and falling upon the golden head, rested there lightly for a moment. Then the hermit turned silently without a word, and slowly hobbling to the door of the ramshackle hut, which for so many weeks had been their mutual home, went in and barred the door after him. They could hear the scrape and thud as the iron fell in between the wood.

Radiating magnificent strength and vitality, the man darted forward like a bacchant god, and seizing the girl around the waist, ran off with her down the steep cliff path. "*Via—via!*" rang out his rich, powerful young voice, as they rushed down, not without danger of falling, to the beach below. Their twinned laughs, rippling silver and heavy gold, floated up to the hermit's ears, though he put his fingers in them so as not to hear.

Then he heard the rhythmical rasping of the oars. Finally he rose from his rough pallet where he had thrown himself, and unbarring the door, came out again upon the ledge; standing on its extreme edge, he gazed down over the foaming ebullience of the agitated sea. The gray mist was still skirting the horizon's edge; from the black clouds im-

pending above his head great drops of rain fell vertically down, and splashed across his pallid face. A muffled cry came to him from the receding skiff; an arm waved to him a signal. Mechanically he returned the salutation with a slight gesture of his palsied arm, and stood there silent and alone, rigid as carven marble, watching the boat as it reached the awaiting yacht. He noted the emptying of the human freight, the dark points crawling up the yacht's side, heard the dulled rattling of cable chains and the grating gasps of the capstan winches as the anchor was pulled up, and finally saw the yacht steam triumphantly forth out toward the open sea, dragging the boat, bobbing up and down upon the foaming churn behind like the merest cork, in its wake.

At last the black wisp of wind-tossed smoke dissolved on the mist-enwrapped horizon; he stretched his lean, emaciated old arms out toward the sea with a gesture of utter desolation.

"Antonio—Antonio!" he cried in a cracked, trembling voice. Like a graven image of solitude he stood there, his long dark hair whipped straight out behind him, his squalid robe flapping and fluttering about his meager body, a black spot against the dull gray of the barren cliffs.



A CHOPIN NOCTURNE

By OLIVE PERCIVAL

A DARK, cool night and oversweet
 With tuberose breath;
 A jeweled javelin in the heart;
 Ecstatic death!

MRS. POTTER BUYS A PRESENT

By HAROLD SUSMAN

SCENE—*A jeweler's shop.*

Enter MRS. POTTER. MRS. POTTER wears an elaborate gown, an elaborate hat and an elaborate face.

SALESMAN—What can I do for you, madam?

MRS. POTTER—I want to get a present.

SALESMAN—What sort of a present, madam?

MRS. POTTER—A wedding present.

SALESMAN—Something in jewelry?

MRS. POTTER—Yes, I suppose so.

SALESMAN—A tiara?

MRS. POTTER—No, nothing so elaborate.

SALESMAN—A necklace?

MRS. POTTER—Perhaps. Let me see your necklaces.

SALESMAN—This way, madam.

(SALESMAN leads the way to a counter.

MRS. POTTER follows him.)

SALESMAN—Here is one.

MRS. POTTER—How much is that?

SALESMAN—Ten thousand dollars.

MRS. POTTER—Oh, that is too expensive.

SALESMAN—Here is one for five thousand.

MRS. POTTER—That is pretty. But it is still too expensive.

SALESMAN—Here is one for two thousand, five hundred.

MRS. POTTER—I don't care for that one.

SALESMAN—Would you like a brooch?

MRS. POTTER—Perhaps. Let me see your brooches.

SALESMAN—This way, madam.

(SALESMAN leads the way to another counter. MRS. POTTER follows him.)

SALESMAN—Here is one. A sunburst.

MRS. POTTER—How much is that?

SALESMAN—Two thousand dollars.

MRS. POTTER—I wouldn't want to spend that much—on a brooch.

SALESMAN—Here is one. A bow-knot. One thousand.

MRS. POTTER—What have you got that is less showy?

SALESMAN—Here is one. A crescent. Five hundred.

MRS. POTTER—That design is so common!

SALESMAN—Would you like a ring?

MRS. POTTER—Perhaps. Let me see your rings.

SALESMAN—This way, madam.

(SALESMAN leads the way to another counter. MRS. POTTER follows him.)

SALESMAN—Here is one. Three diamonds.

MRS. POTTER—How much is that?

SALESMAN—Three hundred.

MRS. POTTER—And that one with two stones?

SALESMAN—Two hundred.

MRS. POTTER—And that one with one stone?

SALESMAN—One hundred.

MRS. POTTER—It doesn't look much—for a hundred dollars!

SALESMAN—Would you like something in silverware?

MRS. POTTER—Perhaps. Let me see your silverware.

SALESMAN—This way, madam.

(SALESMAN leads the way to another counter. MRS. POTTER follows him.)

SALESMAN—Would you like a toilet set?

MRS. POTTER—No.

SALESMAN—A manicure set?

MRS. POTTER—No.

SALESMAN—What would you like?

MRS. POTTER—Have you any thimbles?

SALESMAN—Yes, madam. Here are thimbles. Here is one. It is gold.

MRS. POTTER—How much is that?

SALESMAN—Five dollars.

MRS. POTTER—How much is that silver one?

SALESMAN—Three dollars.

MRS. POTTER—What is the cheapest you have?

SALESMAN—Here is one for a dollar.

MRS. POTTER—Very well. That will do. I will take that. Can you put it in a case for me?

SALESMAN—Yes, madam.

MRS. POTTER—You don't charge for the case, do you?

SALESMAN—No, madam.

MRS. POTTER—Here is fifty cents—seventy-five—eighty-five—ninety-five, ninety-six, ninety-seven, ninety-eight, ninety-nine—one dollar! I am sorry to have to trouble you with pennies. Here is my card. And here is my husband's. Please inclose them. Send it to Miss Griselda Grubb, Number 23 Trinity Avenue, the Bronx. Miss Grubb is a poor relation of my husband's. We have never even seen her, but she sent us an invitation to her wedding, so we have to give her something. And, really, a thimble will be much more suitable for her than a ring or a brooch or a necklace. Don't you think so? Of course! Please don't forget to put it in a case, and to inclose the two cards. Thank you. Good day.



INDIAN SUMMER

By KELSEY PERCIVAL KITCHEL

H EART of my Heart, help me to make love grow
 And blossom where my sun-scarred deserts meet
 The gardens of your soul! Give back the fleet
 And futile years to me! Teach me to know
 That through the trust and faith of you my slow
 And web-entangled pulse shall learn to beat
 Again as once it did in May. But, sweet,
 I lived my spring so many years ago!

I wonder if you understand what spring
 And all therein has meant to me? The May
 Of life is spent and over now; Love's wing
 Can never stir again the deeps nor stay
 The parching where my garden was. Ah, cling
 To me close, close, you sunset of my day!

AN EMERGENCY RATION

By IMPERIA MCINTYRE

IMPERIA to the Editor:

And the way I came to use this pen name is funny, too.

The Editor to Imperia:

Why not give us the story?

Imperia to the Editor:

All right; here is the story.

Of course, my real name isn't Imperia McIntyre, although the latter is good enough to indorse cheques with—when there are any. In fact, it was the not having any cheques to indorse by any name whatever that led to my adopting it for a *nom de guerre*. Now it heads a small bank account—almost always overdrawn.

My Blessed Boy's name isn't Rhampsinitus, either—the only other person that was ever called by it was an Egyptian gentleman who has been dead several thousand years—which is why I'm going to call him by it for short.

Rhampsinitus was a verse writer till he fell in love with me. Then he became a poet. From April to September, five consecutive months, he wrote me a poem every day, Sundays and holidays not excepted, for he sent two on the Fourth of July and four on Labor Day. And they were lovely ones, too—if only they'd been a bit more cheery.

Why is it that a man always grows low-spirited when he writes serious love verse—blames his mistress for being cruel and indifferent, and vows that she makes life an unirrigated desert with her hard-heartedness, but that it doesn't matter a very great deal, because he isn't going to live long, anyway? Why, that boy, after being petted and admired and bamboozled and sympathized with for hours and hours in a perfectly

scandalous manner, would go home and start a sonnet explaining to those whom it might concern that his hopeless passion for one who knew not what it was to love had darkened the sun, moon and stars and made the earth fit for nothing but his tomb, which he proposed to occupy immediately! What awful things he did call me when he was thoroughly refreshed with my tea and macaroons!

He never thought of addressing me by my own name, but ran through a whole Parnassian directory of goddesses and nymphs whose names had the accent in the right place for ten-syllable lines. It was a pity that there was no telephone book for Olympus—he would have found it extremely handy. I never said this to him, naturally, for he didn't readily acquiesce in jokes about his poetry, and I wouldn't have hurt the dear fellow's feelings for all the world.

Well, he finally settled down on "Imperia" as best expressing my autocratic heartlessness and general lack of pity for poets. At that time he fancied it rhymed with something or other, or he wouldn't have selected it; but that termination doesn't rhyme with anything at all, in spite of Robert Herrick's unequally yoking together "say" and "Ju-li-a." And even in those desperate moments when he'd get halfway through a sextet calling for two sets of three rhymes each and found himself short one of them, he never cut himself off from all hope of forgiveness in this world and the next by committing such a crime as rhyming "bar," "car" and "Imperi-ar."

You may be interested in the specimens of Rhampsinitus's verse which follow. It was awfully hard for me to

live up to them. For instance, a girl who bookkeeps in three different colors of ink is hardly deserving of such a compliment as this:

CRATER AMORIS

You hold your hollowed hand out, coolly white,
To take the tribute due you, dear, and so
I kiss it full of kisses, as one might
Pour ardent wine into a cup of snow.

Then this next one I received on the day I was in the sulks because my landlady wouldn't let me keep ginger ale in her ice box—which I still think was mean of her.

IMPERIA PREPOTENS

There is no life but where Imperia lives;
No sun is there save bright Imperia's face.
There is no joy but that Imperia gives,
No pain except withdrawal of her grace.
Submit to her—before her kneel ye down—
For heaven and hell are in her smile and frown!

This sonnet would be better for a little touching up, but I haven't time, and I'd never think of asking Rhampsinitus, who probably had trouble enough with it in the past.

You asked me once, Imperia, if I
Sang ever unto others. 'Twas as though
You asked me whether, when the east's aglow
With summer sunrise, burning all the sky
In crimson conflagration, while on high
The happy hymns of choiring songsters go
Mounting amid the morning, I could show
A second sun to sing to. Thou art my
Most sweet, sufficient theme; thou art, besides,
The dear and potent mistress of the song
I sing or sing not, as seems meet to thee,
Ruling me as the white moon rules the tides,
Aloft in heaven riding royally,
Invisibly compelling, sweetly strong.

But after we were married he suddenly stopped poeting. It hurt me. One morning, while he was preparing to go downtown for a lingering eternity of six or seven hours and I'd been bidding him a Marathon farewell all along the passage from the dining room to the door and had nearly become convinced that he wouldn't cease to love me before he got home again, I suddenly recollected one last cause for alarm, and gently extricated myself from his arms, like one of Sir Walter Scott's heroines, who are always doing it.

"Why no more sonnets?" I asked ac-

cusingly. "Why not even any more quatrains, Rhampsinitus?"

Then he said the sweetest thing that even he ever said:

"Sonnets nothing, and quatrains be hanged! Dear girl, I love you too much to scribble rhymes to you. I'm just one big love poem all the time, darling Imperia!"

On hearing this, I unextricated myself. Don't say there is any such act as unextrication, because I did it.

This accounts, I trust, for the "Imperia." Now for the "McIntyre."

Rhampsinitus, who had written a tragedy that the managers laughed at and a comedy that they cried over, was at work on another tragedy. So he subscribed to one of the theatrical papers in order to read the reviews of new pieces, which proved to him that *somebody* wrote plays that were accepted, and to observe how inferior they were to his. I used to read the paper, too, and help him criticize, which I did with Satanic virulence, because I detested those vile authors who got themselves performed when he couldn't get himself. Talk of "elevating the stage"—when it's too high now for my Boy's "Themistocles Triumphant" to climb up on it!

We used to look over the advertisements very carefully, for they're most interesting and open quite a new world to one. Besides, we thought some manager might advertise for plays—which shows what idiots and geese we were. The pictures of the professional people were especially taking. Among them all our favorites were a pair of entertainers—a young man and a girl—who were smiling out of a frame with their faces close together, and positively made you smile in sympathy with them.

They were "The Two Musical McIntyres," and Boy and I used to sit in front of a mirror and imitate those smiles until our cheeks were sprained and we fairly broke down with laughing. Boy came to call me his "little Musical McIntyre," and I came to calling myself that; and, finally, we used "McIntyre" between us to the exclusion of our own true names. One day the in-

spiration struck Boy to prefix "Imperia" to "McIntyre"; and there I was, fitted for life with a name all my own, because it wasn't my own in the least, but one my dear Boy had given me.

Of all the absurd combinations—ancient Roman and modern Scotch—well, it hadn't been manufactured—it had "jes" growed."

The original McIntyres do not advertise in the theatrical paper now. I often wonder whether they've met with some misfortune, or whether they've become so thriving that they don't have to be Musical McIntyres any longer.

Soon after our marriage each of us began to wish that he or she had been born a millionaire or millionairess for the sake of the other. But neither of us had been, as our early histories will show. I first saw the light in Pittsburg—where there isn't any—and had been pushed out of the nest by my parent birds very early, because they couldn't find worms enough to go around. Here in New York I became secretary and bookkeeper for a dentist at twelve dollars a week. You might not think a dentist would want a secretary and bookkeeper, or that I would want to be it—they, I mean—but we both did. When I left him to be married he almost cried, as I certainly would have done if I had foreseen how much I should miss the twelve dollars a week; and he promised to pull all my teeth for nothing whenever I wished. He sent me, too, the finest wedding present I had—a professional sort of one, being a picture of that bad old Norman baron's forcing that poor Jew to pay up by having his molars extracted.

As for my dear Rhampsinitus, he was a young lawyer, very unfortunate in having none but exceedingly wealthy friends, whose affairs were so very big that they couldn't intrust them to any but very big counsel, so that they never gave him any business. Then he had such a fatally honest habit of seeing the justice of the other side's case that his few clients simply hated him—and the fact that he wrote poetry got out and made him a legal pariah.

Still, he had a small income of his own,

together with what I saved by not buying Paris gowns; and pretty soon he was going to sell his tragedy, all in the very blankest blank verse, for no end of money. But in the meantime we were in need of many things which we had to deny ourselves, and not in need at all of one particular thing, which we didn't deny ourselves, and which was the cause of much bother—and of this story.

While we were in the country, down at New Lampsacus Upper Village, I came, saw and was conquered by the sweetest Chippendale sideboard that ever lived, and I told Rhampsinitus that I simply must have it, or perish. It was the first extravagance which I had proposed since our marriage, and so Rhampsinitus went to inspect. He went alone, or I very much fear that what happened wouldn't have happened. The sideboard belonged to a nice old lady who lived alone in a nice old house, with niceness and oldness all about her.

Boy was gone some time; and when he returned he wore a look compounded of upliftedness, apprehension and sullen resolve, which I knew to indicate that he'd been doing something deplorably honest which he was ashamed to confess. It turned out that the nice old lady had had no idea of the value of the sideboard, for which seven dollars appeared to her so exorbitant a price that she blushed crimson when she asked it. Then Rhampsinitus's conscience—it's too active even for a minister, to say nothing of a New York lawyer—tackled him hard, as my brother Sam would say, and literally downed him for a loss. That foolish, soft-hearted, quixotic, honorable, splendid Boy told that nice old lady just what that Chippendale sideboard was worth—\$225—and somehow or other managed to end the disastrous interview by giving his note for one year for that sum, the sideboard to remain in her possession till we came again the next season! If I'd been there—But, oh, I'm so glad I wasn't! And it made me love my Boy more than ever.

Returning to town, we came into collision with one of those creepy coincidences that make you want to call up the cook to sit with you. One of the

companies in which some of Rhampsinitus's money was invested cut its dividend; and the reduction in our income was precisely \$225! The same day Rhampsinitus's best client withdrew his business because Boy wouldn't help him rob somebody. That Chippendale sideboard must have been partly built out of the materials of Pandora's box; and the very thought of it set up a whole stableful of nightmares in my brain every time I slept. Boy was pretty remorseful over the affair, and there were days when I almost scolded him. Think of that!

"Rhampsinitus," said I, all at once, one day after having proved to my complete dissatisfaction that two and two only made four, when I absolutely must have them make five, and perhaps six, "Rhampsinitus, I've just thought of a way to get that money—a sinful way—a coarse and brutal and sordid and vulgar and almost criminal way!"

"Well, it's not murder, at any rate, is it?" inquired Rhampsinitus, who had been married to me long enough not to be easily stampeded.

"Oh, dearest man, murder's respectable compared to it. Seething the kid in its mother's milk may possibly be a bit worse, but not much."

"You don't say!" yawned Rhampsinitus. "What can it be?"

"It's this: I've got a japanned cake box which is ram, cram, jam full of those poems you used to write to me during your courtship—so rammy, crammy, jammy full that I can only just shut down the lid after I've had it up."

"Then why do you have it up?"

"Because I want to read the poems over again, silly. I read them every week or so."

"But why?"

"Because I love you, and want you for always."

"But you've got me for always."

"Yes, but then I was only getting you—and I wasn't sure—then—that it was for always; and the poems made me feel more confidence. Oh, poet, your poetry was so sweet!"

"Well?"

"Well, what would you think of a

Laura who would copy Petrarch's sonnets off on her typewriter—with three installments unpaid on it—and sell them to the magazines? And I don't care a straw how anachronistic I am!"

"I should think Petrarch would be tickled to death to be able to furnish her with some saleable paper."

"You angelic seraph of a Rhampsinitus! Do you mean you'd let me?"

"Little girl, there isn't anything that would make you happy that I wouldn't let you do—no, not anything, my dearest Imperia McIntyre!"

"There! That's the name we'll send them out under," I cried. And then I cried again: "No, it isn't! Why, I, Imperia McIntyre, didn't write those poems. If I sign them it'll be a kind of fraud—something like personating a policeman, which my brother Sam got suspended from college for—and for personating him on his post and sober, Sam said."

"Aren't you and I one? That's what you say when you insist upon my ordering only one portion for both of us and then make me eat the whole of it. Sauce for the goose, you know."

"Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. Please don't argue, dear."

"But I don't care to use my own name—it will injure me professionally—"

"I thought you'd been injured professionally all you possibly could be—"

"—professionally; and, moreover, I wish to reserve it for my play. No, I don't care to sign the stuff."

"Stuff, Rhampsinitus McIntyre! Stuff!"

"Oh, no, Imperia dear, I didn't mean—"

"Rhampsinitus, those poems are simply beautiful—and they were written to me! Stuff!"

It took my poor Boy exactly seven minutes by the alarm clock on the mantel to make his peace. I'd have extended the time to ten minutes if I hadn't been too sorry for him to do it. You see, I didn't mind an atom about that "stuff"—I was merely punishing him for not doing at once as I wanted him to about signing the poems. Then, having brought him to being ready to

agree to any mortal thing for the sake of forgiveness, I calmly abandoned my position with:

"Of *course*, you are not to sign them. It would be *indelicate* and *absurd*."

He looked at me with that bewildered, "Then, what on earth was all the fuss about?" expression which his sex assumes when it cannot follow the workings of the feminine intellect; but he had the sense to say nothing, and I rewarded him by declaring:

"And what we will do is to put a different name to each one—the crazier the better."

So I typewrote those poems out—all but seven of the very dearest, which I keep in the drawer with mother's letters and that one lock of little Pussy's hair. The two of us invented all sorts of eccentric and outrageous names. Incidentally, I will ask if you would ever even dream that any creature under the canopy could be named "Eudorus Higgs," which was the signature to "Love Lost, Life Lost?" Well, there could. He is in the Portland cement business out West, and threatened to prosecute.

The poems were sent out. But—and aren't you ashamed, Mr. Editor, for you helped do it?—every single last one of them came back! The editors "declined with thanks," and "much regretted," and "were sorry to say," and spoke of the "pressure upon our columns," and protested that lack of literary merit was not necessarily implied by rejection. You are a polite and deprecatory set of executioners, truly. Some of those refusals were so much like acceptances that only the sight of the smudgy, wrinkled old manuscript made me comprehend that still another moulting chicken had come home to roost.

"Here's that horrid *Cornucopia* has returned 'Superior To Fate I Stand,' with just the usual green slip that I've had nine of already. This completes the bunch. They've all been refused."

"Serves 'em right," grunted Rhampsinitus drearily. "They never were much, anyway. Where did I get the idea I could write poetry?"

A woman can never understand a

man's acknowledgment of inferiority. Besides, I regarded every one of those rejections as a personal insult to both of us—he, the singer, I the sung—and so many testimonials to the stupidity and mean narrow-mindedness of editors.

"The real trouble is, the poems are too good, Boy. They are so unusual and original and epoch making that they frighten those people. But if it is supposed by them or anybody else that I'm not going to see them in print, why, then—"

I kissed Rhampsinitus into a more militant state, went to my room and cried a little, and then seized one of a sadly low pile of five-dollar bills and saluted forth.

I bought a package of big envelopes to send the things out in, and a package of smaller ones to have them sent back in; and also two hundred stamps—oh, how poor it makes one feel to buy stamps—and kept that poetry circulating all over these United States, "east and west and south and north," like the Etruscan messengers in Macaulay's "Horatius," to thirty-five-cent magazines and twenty-five-cent magazines and fifteen-cent magazines and ten-cent magazines and five-cent Sunday papers and one-cent evening dailies, falling alike on the just and unjust. And from east and west and south and north those poems kept coming back. I think some periodicals must make their pressmen and engineers read manuscripts "on the side"—otherwise, how do they get so soiled? I had a hopeful theory that the blacker they were the nearer they had come to being accepted; but Rhampsinitus pointed out that there are no degrees in a thing's not happening, and the manuscripts had to be recopied just the same to delude the next editor into thinking it had been sent nowhere else, and thus to hide its shame.

But at last some of the verses began to be printed—then began not to be paid for. They did not appear in the best magazines, however, and came perilously close to the soap advertisements which had to be placed "next to reading matter." But one evening I stole up behind Boy, who was trying to make two

deficits in our household accounts balance, and slid a letter over his head before his very eyes. It was a solemnly cordial communication from one of the first classiest English monthlies, accepting with decorous enthusiasm "your very excellent and scholarly sonnet, 'Ad Imperiam Reginam,'" requesting further contributions and inclosing a draft for five pounds.

The poem appeared very soon after, and was copied all around in this country. Then that little thing, "Moonlight In Her Hair," came out in a Western paper and made something of a hit, and after that I disposed of everything I had, except a poor, crippled sonnet with only thirteen lines in it and two feet missing from those. The twenty-second one sold brought the total amount received from the bunch up to \$232.50. After I'd added it up wrong four times and Rhampsinitus right once, I executed a war dance of considerable intensity all around Boy, and ended by choking him blue, so he said, though he looked magenta.

"Now," I exclaimed, shaking him severely, "now, Blessed Boy, send that nice old lady a cheque for that nice old sideboard immediately, forthwith and at once!"

He did; but there was a long delay in receiving any answer; and when it did come no sideboard came with it. Rhampsinitus manifestly avoided the subject, and it was weeks before I forced a confession from him by various mental and physical tortures. Rhampsinitus is as brave as a lion, but he cannot stand questioning or being tickled under the chin. This was his miserable story:

The nice old lady had proved to be not quite so nice as she was old, and had sold that Chippendale sideboard to somebody else for \$250—and then accused us of trying to cheat a poor widow woman!

"She intended to keep our cheque, as well as the note, as a sort of fine," said Rhampsinitus, "and I had some difficulty in convincing her that she couldn't have her cake and sell it and eat it two or three times over."

The same lady subsequently made

New Lampsacus Upper Village too cold to hold us—we were positively frozen out of the place by the frigid scorn of the inhabitants, who naturally sided with their wronged townswoman.

But from that time everything seemed to go right with us, as everything had gone wrong before. One of Rhampsinitus's wealthy but unremunerative friends ate himself to death, and another was put into a sanatorium and another into a jail; and Rhampsinitus got their estates to take care of; and, judging by the way some of the rest of them are going on, I shouldn't be surprised if he got a few more pretty soon. We now have many luxuries and a number of necessities.

I had formerly written some little verse myself; but bookkeeping for the dentist and getting married had rather obscured my faculty. But in copying and touching up the poems I'd caught the fever again, so that I now took to writing sonnets and things and reading them to poor Rhampsinitus after arranging the furniture around him so that escape was impossible. At the end of a month or so of this he said he could never forgive himself for what I must have suffered during his poetic assaults upon my sensibilities, and that his only excuse was that he had "little wotted." I showed him that little wotting is a failing common to the whole human race, and told him not to fret.

To these poems of mine, being mine, I signed my own name—my best name, more really my name than the one I was baptized with, for it is the name my Boy loves me under—without calling again upon the aid of that fractious and recalcitrant old god-father, Eudorus Higgs. I wonder, Mr. Editor, if you are going to accept the bundle of rhymes that I am now getting ready to send you? I don't care very much if you don't, though, for nothing annoys or depresses me now that Boy is happy.

Only, he isn't perfectly happy. One of his rose leaves has a wrinkle in it, and it feels as large as a cabbage leaf to him. Nobody will take his play, or even look at it; and every day the blank verse grows blanker and blanker!

THE CITY EDITOR

By NEWTON A. FUESSLE

HATFIELD, the city editor, frowned at the assignment sheet before him. Occasionally his glance, cold and gray as sleet, roved about the big room, where a score of reporters sat punching typewritten sentences upon copy paper. Slaves they were to the master at the desk. Mingled hatred and fear of him had hardened their obedience into the temper of the cutlass, and they slashed into the heart of human interest stories with the heartless cunning he had taught them.

Suddenly Hatfield became aware that someone had paused beside his desk. He raised a pair of freezing eyes, set like gimlets into a brutal face, which hardened quickly into a forbidding scowl when he beheld Lawrence. Thrice in the past week had Lawrence cut into the day's program of Hatfield's with requests for a job. Thrice had he been turned away with curt refusal.

"I've told you three times that there's not a thing doing on this paper!" the city editor exclaimed.

The speaker's eyes returned to his assignment sheet; but Lawrence, who for three days had not sat down at a restaurant table for a meal, stood rooted to the spot.

"Can't you give me some sort of an assignment—anything at all?" he persisted haltingly, desperately.

Many a job hunter had Hatfield thrust from his presence, sending them forth into the streets, into the dull menacing roar of the city, to deprivation, to hunger and heartbreak. Never had the surly man at the city desk felt the stir of sympathy when youths, panting for work, paused at his desk. His soul was

as gaunt as his body. He was lean of spirit and lean of heart. City editors of all time have been known for harshness and ill temper. When the staff of reporters is adequate to handle the day's quest for singular drama, looted from the locked chambers of the hearts of the city's millions, the man who holds down the city desk has neither time nor inclination to listen to the appeal of haggard youths out of jobs but with indomitable persistence and callousness to rebuff.

Yet, there was something in Lawrence's question, or rather in his tones, which stirred, somehow, an answering something in Hatfield's brain. Perhaps it was the inexplicable touch of the hand of fate. Perhaps it was the vague dim memory of the time, years ago, when he himself had flung a similar question, intoned with similar desperation, at a former city editor of the same newspaper. Perhaps it was only the softening influence of several highballs he had drunk half an hour ago. Whatever it was, he looked up again and said:

"Where are you from?"

"Denver," answered Lawrence.

"Well, you've made a hell of a mistake in coming here. Everything is tied up. There isn't a job in town. You'd better beat it again for the West."

"Unfortunately," answered the youth while the shadow of a smile fluttered to his face, "there isn't a rate war among the common carriers, and my shoes aren't in condition to submit to a Marathon."

A grin struggled faintly to the hard lips of the city editor.

"Broke?" something made him ask. Lawrence nodded in affirmation.

"Then you're certainly in bad," added the city editor. "How are you keeping afloat?"

"I'm traveling the free lunch route, dodging in and out of saloons like a rat, and grazing on the rye bread and dill pickles without the formality of buying a drink. Haven't made the N.C.R. ring for a week."

"What sort of luck did you have when you left Denver?" inquired Hatfield, the hinges of whose tongue had been strangely loosened by the drinks he had taken.

"I don't want to cut loose with a hard luck story," answered Lawrence, "but I've certainly been in bad. Rode the bumpers from Denver to Omaha, worked on the *News* for two weeks and got the can tied to me for beating up the chief of police. In Sioux City I got pinched for looting free grub in the barroom of the West Hotel. Called on my uncle in Des Moines, tried to negotiate a small loan, but drew a wad of advice. I was born under an unlucky star, and even at that I guess I've suffered a horrible relapse," concluded the young soldier of fortune laconically.

Hatfield was silent for a moment. Then an idea occurred to him, and he said abruptly: "Sounds like good dope. Sit down over there and write me a couple of columns of feature stuff on a newspaper man out of a job. Make it breezy. Throw in the human interest. I'll pay you space rates."

The tiredness in the young man's eyes fled before the look of hope which leaped into them. Through his brain ripped a spark of exultation. He murmured a word of thanks, and made his way toward one of the typewriters. Hardly had he adjusted a sheet of paper when Hatfield strode in his direction.

"Hungry?" he demanded.

"God, yes!" rose feebly to the reporter's lips.

"Go out and eat before you write your stuff," the city editor replied curtly.

Hatfield returned to his desk, and Lawrence, the man who had not sat down to a meal for three days, made his way to the elevator with the dazed

consciousness that a silver dollar was in his hand.

It was not a flicker of pity, but cold common sense, which had prompted the harshest city editor west of Park Row to tell the youth to go out and eat before he wrote his story. He knew, by brutal analysis, by hard calculation born of years at the city desk of a great newspaper, that strong words, clever sentences and telling paragraphs do not leap to the paper in the typewriter when hunger drags wearily at the machinery of the brain. Beefsteaks are productive of keen copy, as every newspaper writer knows. And Hatfield, reader of men that he was, knew with deadly accuracy that Lawrence had in him two columns of strong and timely feature stuff. He had therefore taken the precaution first of satisfying the belly need. He knew that the youth's story of a grim and adventurous fight with hard adversity would touch the hearts of over two hundred thousand readers of the paper. This the brutal machine of a man, heartless himself, but trained to stir the hearts of the multitudes, knew full well. For this was Christmas week!

A half-hour later Lawrence reappeared. The chill of blustering December which had slumbered for days in his marrow was warmed at last by foods and fats; and the jingle of his typewriter commenced. Lawrence wrote carefully, summoning all the sinew of his training to the task. For upon the success of his story hung the possibility of a regular job on the staff. As words appeared, sentences were born and paragraphs were driven into place on the page before him, he was conscious that he was writing with the energy of despair.

For an hour the murmur of his typewriter, clicking softly, continued. And so he wrote on with all the graphic eloquence at his command; and in his blood was the flow of irony as he recounted the deprivation he had known; there was a sound of cynicism in the rattling keys, and biting arraignment of conditions flowed in terse language to the copy paper.

As Lawrence wrote on there came to

his ears frequent bursts of freezing profanity, drifting from the hard lips of the city editor. One reporter was lashed with epithets which would have done credit to the vocabulary of an East India hell ship. A second was discharged from further duty in a tempest of the editor's ungovernable rage. Several others caught withering reprimands for errors which would have been considered trifling in any other pursuit than this, the hardest profession of all times. Gruff words, curt commands, and flings of sarcasm kept coming incessantly from the city editor; and the mouth from which they came, seen under the droplight above his desk, had the appearance of a saber gash in his forbidding face.

When he had glanced over his story for corrections, Lawrence made his way toward the desk and laid the folded sheets before Hatfield.

"Wait a minute," muttered the latter.

Lawrence stood still, regarded the gaunt features, the bulldog jaw, the razor cut on the cheek, the unkempt hair, the hands strangely wrenched as though by manual toil, and wondered what harsh career, what hard paths of destiny, what grueling forces of fate had twisted the soul of this man.

"Not bad copy," acknowledged Hatfield when he had raced through several of the typewritten pages. "How would you like to cover an assignment for me tonight?" he asked abruptly.

"Give me anything," returned Lawrence eagerly.

"Go over to the Brevoort Hotel and interview that Suffragette. She got in this afternoon. Make her slough off something hot. Then write me something with irony in it. Make it bite. I hate that woman!" he muttered with a snarling oath.

Hatfield's brutal arraignment of this leader of women left Lawrence, hardened misanthrope that he was, quivering with resentment. But he had played this game of reporting too long to murmur against his masters. Yet, as he strode out of the office, he was aware of a longing to turn and hurl the metaphor of the bar sinister at the city editor.

Into the surging aisles of the city, alive with their streams of men and women hurrying their escape from the cold, out into its glare of a million glittering electric lights, darted Lawrence. Soon he wrenched himself out of a pack of pedestrians and entered the Brevoort Hotel. The huge lobby received him indifferently. A brief colloquy with the man at the clerk's desk, a quick exchange of sentences over the telephone, and Lawrence ascended to the parlor floor.

He had heard and read much about this celebrated leader of women. As he waited he steeled himself for the task before him. He must play a cold and calculating game of wits and audacity, must trick her into divulging things which could be used in the printed column, under pitiless headlines, against her. It was the same game he had been playing for many a year. It was his game of life. And on every hand there were other wolves of men playing the same merciless game as they obeyed the commands of the men at newspapers' city desks. The feeling of revulsion which had gone through his frame at the spoken word of the city editor had subsided; and now he waited calmly. He had crossed swords with many a woman during the passing years, and had wrung from them, in spite of themselves, the sensational, the startling, the unsavory—which had appeared next day in the printed column, which must have left a broken heart.

In the brilliant lobby of the hotel below, the reporter beheld a gay picture of life. It was the nightly parade of wealth. And in other hotels on every hand a kindred picture of life was repeating itself. Beautiful women, fluttering hither and thither, exhibited delicious complexions, the velvets and sables of costly garments, their lustrous furs. As he drank the scene deeply with his eyes, Lawrence felt himself swept with a corroding sense of injury. All his life he had been able only to gaze at such scenes from a distance. He was an alien. He did not belong. It was a feast of beauty he had never been able to taste, save with hungering eyes. And always, as

tonight, his impotent yearning, his sense of bitter injury, had heightened the irony in his soul, rendering him valuable to city editors, relentless in difficult interviews, and a writer of stinging copy.

Soon there was the murmur of a woman's approach, and Lawrence rose to greet the celebrated lady. Astonishment stirred in him when he beheld her. Instead of being as he imagined she would be, he saw a mite of a woman, severely plain and black in her attire, with soft gray motherly eyes, with tones as gentle as though she had never raised her voice to address an audience larger than her husband and her children. About her was something strangely dissimilar to those befurred and silken creatures of luxury and tinkling voices in the scene below, those modern improved toys of a higher civilization. Between her and them yawned an illimitable gulf, a stretched-out space of vast distances. Something told him, in a flash of instinctive knowledge, that this little woman had never known the candied hours of these others—the soft easy things of life, the serene floating with lazy currents. And, somehow, there flowed into his soul an awed respect, a reverence almost, as she gave him her eyes.

She sank into a seat at his side. She began to talk, and, as her tones flowed on, Lawrence, the hardened interviewer, whose mental jimmy had made women quail before him, who had wrung salt from the eyes of society leaders of many cities, forgot that he was a reporter. He forgot the stinging command of his chief, forgot the mission he had been sent to accomplish.

She told him of her work, of her plans and ambitions, her passion to fulfill the mission she had accepted. There was a mesmeric something about her personality, heightened by the subtle quality of her plainness. Already her interviewer felt the power which must have been hers as a platform speaker, as the leader of multitudes of women who thought, and toiled, and prayed. It was as though one's own mother were speaking. Her strength lay not in the common sense of her utterance, not in the

deadly logic of her argument, not in the kindly, gentle voice, but in a stranger, vaguer something which flowed from her in irresistible currents.

When the reporter rose at length to go, the little woman asked several thoughtful, yet unpatronizing, questions about himself, about his work; and Lawrence, as he answered, was smitten with a sudden realization that he had secured no story. Nothing he could write would satisfy the greed of the man at the desk, nor glut his scavenger appetite, nor please his merciless eyes. He would sneer and slash the interview into a meager stickful of type, would thrust back into the freezing streets the reporter whom he had tried and found wanting. And, in some way, as the vision of the little woman hung in his gaze, Lawrence was glad.

"Can I detain you a moment longer?" she asked when Lawrence started to take his departure.

"Certainly," he acquiesced.

"There is something—something more—that I'd like to speak to you about," she returned slowly, hesitantly.

And then she began once more to talk, and now it was of herself, of intimate secrets of her life. Startling sentences followed one upon another, now hesitantly, now in breathless haste. Lawrence trembled as he listened. The surge of hot emotion ran through his frame. The speaker was laying bare her soul. She was no longer the great Suffragette. She was a woman who had sinned, who had suffered poignant sorrow, who carried burdens grievous to be borne. Things which none had seen, nor known, nor guessed, she was flinging into words. Her statements came in lumps, unminced, unsoftened by qualifying phrase. Lawrence stood dumb before her, battling against the dimness which he knew was coming into his eyes. Never in all his life had he listened to as burning a story of human interest!

There were frequent pauses in her recital, and at such times the listener knew that she was steeling herself for sentences to come. Twice her steady tones wavered into trembling. Sometimes there was quivering of her lips,

and sentences began but did not end. She was not a woman of easy tears and there was no dimness in her eyes to show that she was prey to terrific emotions. There had only come into her eyes a sort of heaviness.

At length she came to a longer pause; and her story was told. It was fully a minute before Lawrence could find his tongue.

"But surely you do not mean that you want me to say this in cold print!" he ejaculated in protesting tones.

"Just that," she answered quickly, pleadingly.

"But you have no idea—you can't imagine how it will look!" he urged desperately. Already he could see the wolfish man at the desk, satisfied and gloating, could see the huge and pitiless headlines, the biting paragraphs of the story.

"You must!" she moaned, with a great tiredness in tones and eyes. "Please—for pity's sake!" she added.

"I will," answered Lawrence, his objection softening into putty at her appeal.

She sighed her thanks, bade him good night, and the touch of her hand went through his blood like a blessing.

Five minutes later the reporter strode into the city room of the newspaper, and made his way past rattling typewriters to the desk of the city editor.

"What have you got?" snapped Hatfield, grown more disheveled with the passing hours, more irritable, more harshly domineering.

"A great story," replied the reporter, dazed at the thought of the task which confronted him, an unwilling actor in a forbidding drama.

"Get it up carefully," commanded the city editor, his eyes hardening into a glitter. "And give her hell!" he added with an oath.

Lawrence sank into a chair by one of the machines; his fingers tapped the keys, and he began driving his story into shape. More than once, as he wrote on, blind unreasoning impulse urged him to rip the story off his machine and tear it into shreds. But always there shot back into his mind the memory of the

mite of a woman's heavy, tearless eyes as she pleaded with him to write what she had told him. And therefore he wrote on, weaving the drab fabric of the strangest story of human interest which chance had ever tossed his way.

Lawrence gave no thought to the city editor's command to write with irony. Keep or lose his job, he had resolved to write only the straightforward story of the interview, and his resolve did not change as he drove sentence after sentence into place. At last the task was done, and he laid the folded sheets of his story upon the city editor's desk. He turned quickly to withdraw.

"Wait a minute," muttered Hatfield.

Lawrence paused and stood watching the other's brutal stoical face as Hatfield scanned page after page of copy which other reporters had placed on his desk. Frequently he swore, and story after story he tossed to adjacent copy readers with sharp instructions.

At last he picked up Lawrence's story, leveled harsh eyes upon it, and began to read. Lawrence hated the breed of city editors, and now, as Hatfield began to read and gloat, he regarded him with a supreme unutterable hatred.

Then a strange thing happened. Into Hatfield's face crept a sudden pallor, and beneath the glow of his droplight his set and hardened features looked like the mask of death. His eyes clung to the typewritten page before him. Presently his hands laid hold of the sides of his desk, closed upon the wood in a hard grip, and his whole body shrank under the lash of violent trembling.

Lawrence stared—stared like a man who dreams. Never had his eyes been fascinated by as singular a byplay, unparalleled in the city room of a great daily. Slowly he became aware that Hatfield's lower jaw hung trembling, that his face was growing whiter, that his body swayed strangely to and fro. Then the city editor glanced up, and in his eyes was a look which the reporter never could forget.

"Did—she—say—*that*?" asked Hatfield, forcing the words with difficulty through the fevered dryness of his mouth.

"Word for word," answered the reporter.

In the pause that followed, Lawrence, who felt the horror of the city editor's gaze to his very marrow, made swift mental review of the story he had written, as again there passed through his brain the words the woman had uttered.

It was her son that she sought, she had said, her son who had served a five-year term in the penitentiary, whom she had cast from the bosom of her family because of his crime, who had vanished as completely as if by death after his release, whom now after many years she sought. Hers, she had told the reporter, was a tired longing and a heartbreak incomparable with that which she had suffered because of his crime. Hers was the greater crime, she had said, hers the more hideous offense—the withdrawal of her mother's love. The gnawing of her remorse had become maddening, and at last she must tell all the world of this

greater crime of hers, long confessed in the secret of the chamber, but withheld for all these years from the world. And maybe, she had added, her confession in public print might somehow bring him back to her.

And of a sudden, while reviewing the tale he had written, while his eyes were fixed in searching, wondering gaze upon the man at the desk, an amazing thought sprang wildly through his brain. Then came a chill of terror, shivering through his body, and he trembled violently where he stood. And then, dazed by the flash of understanding which had been vouchsafed him, he was dimly conscious that the coldest brute of a city editor was lurching out of his chair, seizing his hat and coat, and flinging with mad haste out of the office. But the cold, hard face was transfigured. It shone with the light of miracle.

And he was returning to his mother, whom he had lost but found again.



ENGLISHMAN (*seeing the joke at last*)—Oh, I say, that's ripping, don't ye know—quite by way of being what you Americans call a "biscuit Johnny."
AMERICAN—Eh! A "biscuit Johnny"? Ah, yes; I suppose you must mean a crackerjack.



WHEN your heart gets broken there is nothing like having another string to your bow.



TRUTH crushed to earth will rise again, but when you stretch it you never know what it will do.

INTERVIEWED*

By ROI COOPER MEGRUE

CHARACTERS

MISS STELLA HALE (*a smart, pretty girl, a reporter on the New York Recorder*).
JAMES M. HAMMET (*a middle-aged captain of industry, crooked, suave and hypocritical*).
A POLICEMAN.

PLACE: *New York.*

TIME: *The Present.*

SCENE — *The library of James M. Hammet's New York residence—a charming room, richly furnished. There is a desk in the center and a large bay window at the left, opening on a balcony. There is a door in the center and one at the right.*

The curtain rises on an empty stage. There is no light save the moonlight at the window, which silhouettes the figure of a woman tampering with the lock. There is the click of metal on glass, a crash of bursting wood, the window opens, and STELLA HALE comes in on tiptoe. She carefully lowers the window shade and tests it once or twice. She flashes a dark lantern, focuses it on the shining telephone, crosses over to the desk and picks up the 'phone.

MISS HALE

HELLO, Operator, give me 6000 Murray Hill. Is this the *Recorder*? I want the city editor. This is Miss Hale speaking. Hello, is that you, Mr. Drane? This is Miss Hale. . . . Yes, I'm in Hammet's library. I got in the way we talked over. What time is it? I'm in the dark here. . . . Eleven-ten? He went to the theater, so he'll be back any minute. . . . After breaking into his house get cold feet? I guess not. If I get the stuff, I'll try to be in time to catch the first edition. If you don't hear from me by two o'clock, you'll know I'm in trouble. . . . You think Hammet'll 'phone for the police? I suppose he will, but as soon as I'm through talking to you, I'm going to cut this 'phone wire. . . . Yes, that's true, maybe he *has* got

a police call. Say, now that I'm here, have Rodney write some stuff for an introduction about how I sneaked in and made the newspaper hit of the year by getting the inside story of James M. Hammet's connection with the Oklahoma copper deal. No, it won't be a waste of time to have Rodney write it; I *know* I'll get the story. . . . No, I'm not foolhardy to have called you up. I'm all alone, and anyhow, I'm whispering. . . . I say I'm *whispering*. (*Then screaming*) *Whispering*. W-i-s-p—well, I never could spell anyhow. Good-bye. . . . Oh, all right, I'll hold the wire a minute. What is it? . . . What? Johnson, the president of Oklahoma Copper, committed suicide? . . . You got it over the 'phone? Did he leave anything, letters or papers exposing or in-

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criminating Hammet? . . . Not a line. Too bad. Oh, I know you don't believe Hammet's at the bottom of this Oklahoma business, but I do, and I mean to find out! Trust a woman's intuition. Good-bye; tell him not to forget about the window shade. So long.

(She rings off, takes up the scissors and clips the 'phone wire, then she focuses the lantern on the desk, where there are several push buttons. She reads, "Secretary—assistant secretary—stenographer—butter—footman—valet—chauffeur—fire alarm—Ah, police alarm!")

There is a noise off stage; she turns out her lantern. There is the sound of her opening the desk drawer. The center door opens, letting in a stream of light. HAMMET is seen talking apparently to the butler, who is not seen.)

HAMMET

I don't wish to be disturbed; under no circumstances interrupt me.

BUTLER

There was a young woman reporter called; she said she'd return.

HAMMET

I won't see her. Good night.

(He comes into the room and switches on the light. MISS HALE is seen cowering at the desk with the drawer half rummaged, and papers strewn about.)

HAMMET

Well, what are you doing here? *(Calling)* James!

MISS HALE *(sobbing)*

Don't call the servants. For Heaven's sake, don't—spare me—let me go!

HAMMET *(at door)*

Never mind, James.

(He turns back to her)

This promises to be interesting. So you're a thief?

MISS HALE *(sullenly)*

Yes.

HAMMET

A woman thief?

MISS HALE

Yes, naturally; I'm not a man disguised.

HAMMET

At least you've got nerve—a second-story woman—to break into my house. What did you do it for?

MISS HALE *(sarcastically)*

Well, I didn't know you socially—I don't suppose we have many mutual friends—and as I love beautiful pictures I thought I'd just drop in to gratify my artistic sense.

HAMMET

A woman burglar with a sense of humor!

MISS HALE

Why not? You don't have to be honest to have a sense of humor.

HAMMET

What pictures did you come to see?

MISS HALE

My favorites have a green background with a portrait of George Washington. They're yellow on one side—about so long *(measuring)* and they are marked in plain figures 100.

HAMMET *(smiling)*

But I don't leave money in my desk.

MISS HALE *(picking up a handful of miscellaneous white papers)*

So I see. I ought to have known that James M. Hammet wouldn't be careless with his loose change.

HAMMET

But your favorite pictures—hundred-dollar bills—aren't change.

MISS HALE

They'd be a change for me all right. If I ever met a hundred dollars face to face I wouldn't know how to treat it.

HAMMET

Don't you think you're rather stupid to be a common thief?

MISS HALE

It isn't stupid to be a thief—but it's the devil to get caught.

HAMMET *(reflectively)*

But we all get caught, sooner or later.

MISS HALE *(quickly)*

We?

HAMMET (*quickly*)

Oh, I used the word in a general way!

MISS HALE

Oh! (*Smiling*)

HAMMET

No, I wasn't making a confession. I don't belong to your club.

MISS HALE

Oh, I'm sure you wouldn't be a *common* crook! You'd be *steal*—preferred.

HAMMET

You flatter me.

MISS HALE

Not at all. I read the papers.

HAMMET

It seems strange that a lady burglar should be taking me to task for my stock deals.

MISS HALE

I'm not finding fault. I'm envying you. You steal thousands and get away with them—I try to steal tens and get caught.

HAMMET

Suppose we leave my honesty out of the question? After all, to put it in your own way—I haven't been caught with the goods—granted that I got the goods.

MISS HALE

Oh, I'll grant that you got the goods all right!

HAMMET

Let's talk of you.

MISS HALE

That's a subject that always interests me.

HAMMET

How did you get in?

MISS HALE

Oh, I rang the bell, told the butler I was a burglar, and wanted to rob you! He said it was about time somebody robbed you and so he brought me up here.

HAMMET

But what made you steal? You're young and very pretty (*Leaning toward her*), and surely you must have loved some—

MISS HALE (*moving away*)

Nix on the flirting business.

HAMMET (*pompously*)

I wasn't flirting.

MISS HALE

I accept your apology, and you don't even flirt well.

HAMMET (*flirtatiously*)

Perhaps you'll teach me?

MISS HALE

In a minute I'll box your ears.

HAMMET

If you do, I'll kiss you.

MISS HALE (*in mock apology*)

Excuse me, excuse me, I take it all back; I won't box your ears.

HAMMET (*trying to make a hit*)

You know I'm not a bad sort really.

MISS HALE

When I said nix on the flirting, I meant nix. No—double o, no.

HAMMET

Oh, really?

MISS HALE (*mocking him*)

Yes. Oh, really, and if you don't cut it I won't talk to you any more!

HAMMET (*in mock gallantry*)

Oh, please don't go! I don't know what you've stolen yet.

MISS HALE

Oh, don't you? From your previous line of talk, I'd imagine you would have said I'd stolen your heart.

HAMMET (*leaning toward her*)

Perhaps you have.

MISS HALE

If I have, I'm no thief. I'm a poor to-be-pitied kleptomaniac. It was accidental; I give it back.

HAMMET

I don't want it returned with thanks; I'll exchange it for yours.

MISS HALE (*rising*)

If you won't take a hint, I'm going.

HAMMET

Please don't go yet.

MISS HALE

Well, I'll stay a few minutes longer.

HAMMET

Why are you a thief?

MISS HALE

Say, are you still kidding or are you on the level?

HAMMET

I'm on the level because it seems such a pity that a nice girl like you should be a burglar.

MISS HALE (*earnestly*)

Do you really want to know?

HAMMET (*half indifferently*)

Sure I do, if you'll tell me.

MISS HALE (*with much dramatic emphasis*)

It's an old story. You've read it in the papers a hundred times. I lived in Massachusetts. It was an uninteresting grind of chores and routine under the stern supervision of a stern New England family, with whom conscience was everything and a little human sympathy was nothing. I stood the deadly monotony as long as I could and then one day I ran away with a man—Oh, he married me. There wasn't any scandal. We came here to New York—oh, the crowds, the shops, the clothes, the theaters, lights, people, life, living, loving, for I did love him at first. He loved me, too, I guess, but his money gave out just as my baby was born. He was charming and devoted, but no good. He couldn't get a job—not even at \$5 a week—and he lied to me. Pretended on a Monday morning that he'd got a position and then I'd go along happy and relieved until Saturday, when he'd get home shamefaced and admit he didn't have a job at all, but that he lied in order to relieve and comfort me; but that kind of comfort didn't pay bills, so finally I let him go. Then I tried to get work. I'm not bad looking—

HAMMET (*earnestly*)

Indeed you're not.

MISS HALE (*paying no attention to him*)—and found it easily—but I wasn't hired for *work*, so each time I quit. I couldn't forget, you see, that I was the mother of my son. Then it came to be a question of going on the streets or being a thief, for my boy's sake. It was so much easier to be a thief, and I began to steal. I gloried in it, for I could take that baby to the country and see him grow and the color come into his cheeks and dimples into his plump little knees. A three-room flat that looks out on a brick wall where the air smells of dirty clothes isn't particularly good for a kid. A *thief!* . . . Yes, but he was my boy and I loved him. Then only a week ago, the cops almost pinched me for snitching a gold satchel from a crowd of shoppers in Thirty-fourth Street. That sort of got my nerve. It came to me what it'd mean to the kid if they got me. So I decided to try the game once more—make a bigger, bolder smash than ever and then quit. So I picked you out. I watched you, knew you'd gone to the theater tonight—well, here I am and you got me. What are you going to do?

HAMMET

I wonder if your story's on the level?

MISS HALE

Don't it sound so?

HAMMET

Yes.

MISS HALE

I thought it did (*hastily*). But I can't prove it to you, though, you've just got to take my word.

HAMMET (*pompously*)

But you are a thief—a woman thief, and we look to women to be all that's good and fine and honest.

MISS HALE (*dramatically*)

I'm more honest than a mother who leaves her kid to a nurse—more honest than the women you see in the Tenderloin restaurants with all their diamonds. Where do they get them? I didn't sell *myself*. I'm nobody's mistress but my own.

HAMMET (*pompously*)

Your son is the child of a thief. No one has to be a thief. You could have got work—decent work—somehow, somewhere.

MISS HALE

Words, words! It's easy enough to talk. Oh, yes, I remember, you're very philanthropic, aren't you? You give a lot of money to charity, don't you?

HAMMET (*with dignity*)

I give what I can.

MISS HALE

Yes, and especially to prison work. I suppose that's so that if you ever go to jail, it'll be as comfortable as possible for you.

HAMMET

What do you mean?

MISS HALE

What do I mean? Oh, I read the papers! You sit there with all your mock honesty reproaching me with being dishonest. What are you but a thief? Fifty times bigger thief than I could ever be!

HAMMET

I'm afraid you're forgetting yourself.

MISS HALE

I came here to steal a few hundred, if I could, for my kid from a man who'd never miss it, while you— Oh, you've never been caught, that's all! How about that Oklahoma Copper Company?

HAMMET (*startled*)

What do you know about that?

MISS HALE (*recovering her caution*)

What do you know about it?

HAMMET (*easily*)

Oh, nothing, except what I've read! You see, I read the papers, too.

MISS HALE

Oh, you know a lot about it! I fired a shot at you in the dark and it hit the target. You see, I've been interested in your career, and stories about thieves appeal to me. This Oklahoma thing sounds just like your method.

HAMMET

I don't know what you're talking about.

MISS HALE

Oh, yes, you do! You're at the bottom of it. I can see it in your face. I'd make a detective, wouldn't I? I guessed you ruined the Oklahoma Company, even though I didn't see it in the papers.

HAMMET (*sententiously*)

A woman doesn't understand business. You're letting your nerves get the best of you.

MISS HALE

Oh, the hypocrisy of it! You talk honesty to me when you've spent \$50,000 advertising this rotten fake copper company, advising every widow to put her savings in it, every clerk to draw his money from the bank and invest in it, almost guaranteed over the name of James J. Johnson, that they'd double their money, and then yesterday and today you let the stock go to the devil—and ruined hundreds of people to put their money in your pockets. You honest? Think of the sorrow, the sadness, the suffering and suicides you've caused!

HAMMET

Suicides? For Heaven's sake, don't say that!

MISS HALE

Ah! Suicides—that reached you, did it? It's being found out that upsets you, isn't it? You weren't worried when I came here. Like all the rest of your rotten crew you tried to flirt with me. But you sounded like a hypocrite and then it came to me like a flash, you were the man behind Oklahoma Copper. To think, I, a woman thief, should have guessed it and not a newspaper had hinted at it. Oh, it takes a thief to catch a thief!

HAMMET (*worried but bluffing*)

You ought to have got a job on the stage—you're so very dramatic.

MISS HALE

Truth's always dramatic.

HAMMET

I don't care to have any woman—even a thief—say the things you've

said without giving an explanation. I have got about ten thousand shares of Oklahoma Copper, but based on my knowledge of the market and the company, I believed the stock would go up. It's gone to smash. The reason your mentioning the company upset me for a moment, was that I am perhaps the heaviest sufferer. The break in Oklahoma cost me nearly \$400,000 (*Sententiously*). Of course I deplore the losses of the small investor, but I have to think of myself. My friend Johnson (he's president of the company) misadvised me. . . . What are you writing?

MISS HALE (*turning the pad over quickly on which she has been writing*)

Oh, just drawing a picture of you—it's a habit of mine when I'm nervous. Shall I tear it up?

HAMMET

Yes, please. Being sketched reminds me of being interviewed, and I hate newspapers. (*She tears up a sheet of paper but not the one on which she has been writing*)

MISS HALE

So Johnson, the company's president; is a friend of yours?

HAMMET

Yes, a very close friend.

MISS HALE (*pausing for dramatic effect and watching him keenly*)

You'll be sorry, then, to hear that Johnson committed suicide tonight.

HAMMET (*very startled and upset*)

My God! Johnson dead! How do you know?

MISS HALE (*slowly as she thinks up an explanation*)

It was in a—an extra of the *Telegram* tonight. I bought it on my way here.

HAMMET (*who is completely knocked off his feet by the news of Johnson's death and is really not thinking of Miss Hale at all*)

Did he leave any confession—anything about me?

(*During the following scene, MISS HALE is eying HAMMET very keenly. She speaks in a very low, soft voice to egg him*

on, not to intrude her personality upon him, so that he may proceed with his confession without being conscious really that he is talking to her. He on his part is almost hysterically nervous, walking about the room and paying scarcely any notice to her at all.)

MISS HALE

No, nothing; the paper said there were no letters or documents. (*Quietly*) Evidently, he didn't expose you.

HAMMET

Thank Heaven! Poor Johnson—the deal must have ruined him. He threatened this afternoon to kill himself, but I didn't believe him. The fool—the fool!

MISS HALE (*softly*)

He blamed you this afternoon?

HAMMET (*dramatically*)

Yes, but it's not my fault he killed himself, I won't take the blame. He could have come out all right when the stock goes up again if he hadn't lost his nerve, if he'd only just stuck. It isn't my fault. I didn't advise him to buy.

MISS HALE (*egging him on*)

You sold your stock? You let him go to smash?

HAMMET

Yes, yes, but I didn't know Johnson was a quitter. Oh, my God, I made him kill himself! But it wasn't my fault. Listen! You're the only person in the world knows who this, but you're a thief, too, like me, and O, God, I must talk with some one or I'll go mad—mad!

MISS HALE (*very, very softly*)

Go on, I'm listening.

HAMMET

The Oklahoma Company is good. I believed in it but I didn't want my name associated with it. The public had begun to lose confidence in me, but they knew Johnson and what he stood for. I got him to act as the dummy—as president of the company. He believed in the scheme, too. Then came the slump in the market. I was caught hard in Steel and Southern Pacific and Beet Sugar. It looked as if I was going down and out, but Oklahoma didn't break. I

had to get money. The only way was to dump my 50,000 shares on the market in small lots. They were snapped up and I got my cash. I was saved, but the chance then was too good to miss. I knew if I sold Oklahoma heavily with conditions so panicky, I could make it drop and buy it back cheap. I sold short yesterday and today, fifty thousand shares; it dropped thirty-five points. I bought back my fifty thousand. I was saved and I cleaned up a cool million—a million. I couldn't tell Johnson. He couldn't have stood for fooling the public, but I meant to make it all right with him; to put him in something else. Oh, my God, he's dead, he's dead and I can't do it! It's too late. But you see—you're a woman—you understand, you see it wasn't my fault, don't you? I couldn't afford to go broke. I didn't mean to ruin Johnson, the fool, the fool! If he'd only stuck!

MISS HALE

You sold him out; you ruined him. Poor Johnson—the fool—

HAMMET

Yes; you see he *was* a fool.

MISS HALE

Yes, I see he was a fool (*Getting more dramatic*), but what of all the other fools? What of the four or five other little fellows you'll never hear of, who'll probably quit just like Johnson? What of the homes that are in agony tonight because their money's all gone? And it's the first of the month tomorrow, too. What of the husbands that are afraid to face their wives, to tell them that they're ruined? What of the horrible misery that exists tonight because *you* didn't want to go broke—because *you* saw a chance to make a cool million no matter what it cost?

HAMMET

But I don't know those others—I knew Johnson.

MISS HALE

You only suffer now because you knew Johnson—you don't care about the others?

HAMMET

It's all a part of the game—I can't stop people making fools of themselves. I'm not my brother's keeper.

MISS HALE (*rising, almost in loathing at the heartlessness of the man*)

You said I'd understand and I do. Mr. James M. Hammet, you're a thief and a murderer (*Very dramatic*); you've got no pity, no humanity, no anything that's decent. You're rotten through and through and I'm going.

HAMMET (*this attack on him brings him to his senses, makes him realize what he's confessed to her. He pauses*)

So that's the way you feel, is it? Well, that idiot Johnson upset me for a moment, but I guess I've got my nerve back now, or I will soon, and, anyhow, you're not going.

MISS HALE

What are you going to do with me?

HAMMET

I'm not going to let you go to tell everybody what I've just been telling you. You're going to jail as a common thief. When you were telling me that pathetic story about your husband I was pressing this button which communicates with the Homes Protection Company. An officer will be here any moment.

MISS HALE

So you—you scoundrel—you murderer, you're going to turn me over to the police, are you? Oh, don't, don't, for Heaven's sake don't! (*She crawls at his knee almost in fake melodrama.*) Don't, don't—think of my baby!

HAMMET

Your maternal instincts are dramatic, but you go to jail.

MISS HALE

I won't, I won't! I'm going to leave this house now (*She starts to go*).

HAMMET

Oh, no, you're not! Not with that story of mine.

MISS HALE

But I'll tell it to the policeman, anyhow.

HAMMET

No one would believe a thief caught here in my house by the police. *(She starts to go and he holds her. She struggles.)*

MISS HALE

Let me go.

HAMMET *(brutally)*

If you don't stop struggling I'll knock you down. *(Raises his hand.)*

MISS HALE *(for the first time she's really frightened at him)*

Don't you dare touch me! I'm no burglar; I'm Miss Stella Hale of the *New York Recorder*. I'm a reporter. I came here to interview you about Oklahoma Copper, and got what I came for and I'm going.

HAMMET *(more astounded than anything else)*

A reporter? I don't know whether to believe you or not.

MISS HALE *(boldly)*

If you read tomorrow morning's *Recorder* you'll believe me.

HAMMET *(very dangerously)*

Maybe you're a reporter, and maybe not, but I prefer to consider you a burglar. You go with the police, and I've got enough influence to have your mouth stopped permanently.

MISS HALE *(very scared, breaks away from him, runs to window, tries to grab the window shade to pull it up, but he seizes her hand)*

Let me go! I'm afraid, I'm afraid!

HAMMET

No, you don't go out the way you came in, young lady. You leave through the front door—with a police escort.

(She gets one hand free with which she smashes the pane of glass with a crash.)

MISS HALE *(hysterically)*

I will go, I will. I'm afraid of you.

HAMMET *(brutally)*

Shut up you little—

(There is the sound of the front door bell ringing.)

The police—

MISS HALE *(relieved)*

Thank God!

(They pause; the door center opens and a man in the uniform of the Homes Protection Company enters.)

OFFICER *(to Hammet, who is holding Miss Hale)*

Yes, Mr. Hammet, what's the trouble?

MISS HALE

Let me go; don't arrest me.

HAMMET

This young woman is a burglar. She broke into my house, I caught her here. No, I want her arrested. I'll be in court in the morning to prefer charges.

OFFICER

Certainly, sir.
(Looking at Miss Hale for the first time.)

Why, it's lazy Liz.

HAMMET

You know her?

MISS HALE

I never saw him before.

OFFICER

Certainly I know her. Liz is an old offender. They've got the dope on her down at the Rogue's Gallery.

HAMMET *(very much relieved and gratified)*

Good! Then she isn't a newspaper woman from the *New York Recorder*! . . . By Jove!

OFFICER

She a reporter? Certainly not; that's an old gag of hers. She's tried to work it often—and sometimes she gets away with it.

MISS HALE *(screaming)*

I tell you I *am* a reporter.

HAMMET

She almost made me believe it.

OFFICER

Oh, she's clever all right—she's a smart babe—they'll be glad to see her at headquarters.

MISS HALE

This is some terrible mistake. I came here to interview Mr. Hammet regarding his association with Oklahoma Copper.

OFFICER

I don't know nothin' about Oklahoma Copper, but I can tell you you're comin' along with a New York copper, and pretty lively, too!

HAMMET (*smiling*)

That's right, officer.

OFFICER

Come on, gal. (*He takes night stick from pocket.*)

MISS HALE

I won't. If you arrest me, I'll—

HAMMET

Take her away.

MISS HALE

If you touch me, I'll kick and bite and scream—

OFFICER

That's right, Mr. Hammet, she's a tough customer. Suppose I call the patrol wagon.

HAMMET

Good, I want as little trouble as possible. Take her down the back way.

OFFICER (*who has gone over to the 'phone, surprised*)

Why, she's cut the wire.

HAMMET

The little devil!

MISS HALE

You murderer, don't you call me names.

OFFICER

Shut up, kid. (*To HAMMET*) Haven't you another 'phone?

HAMMET

Yes, in my bedroom.

MISS HALE

I won't be arrested, my kiddie, my kiddie! I'll die first!

OFFICER (*putting his hand roughly over her mouth*)

Aw, shut up! Mr. Hammet, you go in your room and call up 3600 Spring—

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police headquarters—and I'll stay here and watch her.

HAMMET

With pleasure. Good-bye, Lazy Liz. Your newspaper fake didn't work, did it? You're a very clever young woman, but not quite clever enough for Mr. James M. Hammet.

(*He goes out*)

MISS HALE (*with a complete change of manner*)

Rodney, Rodney, it worked! I was so scared! He kept me from giving you the signal by pulling up the window shade, so I had to smash the glass.

OFFICER (*with a complete change of manner also*)

I thought that meant you were in trouble, so I hustled.

MISS HALE

Dear old boy!

RODNEY

Did you get the story?

MISS HALE

You bet I did. He fell hard for the burglar business and then I wormed the whole thing out of him. He had 50,000 shares of Copper—sold short to smash the company, picked up the stock thirty-five points lower. Johnson was the dummy and went broke. That's why he killed himself. I took down every word he said in shorthand. Here are my notes—you can read them; you have before. Here's a sketch of the rotten scoundrel. He's the limit. He tried to flirt with me.

RODNEY

The dog!

MISS HALE

But we've got the story. It's State's prison for him.

RODNEY

You nervy little beggar, you've landed the biggest newspaper beat of the year, and it was all your idea, too.

MISS HALE

Here—take the stuff and my notes and hurry back to the *Recorder*. You can catch the first edition.

RODNEY

Did you look in the desk?

MISS HALE

I'm only an amateur thief—I never thought of it. (*She takes paper from drawer; they glance at it.*) Here's an order to sell ten thousand Oklahoma; that's enough. He's sure to be back in a minute.

RODNEY

We'll reproduce that on the first page.

MISS HALE

Ssh! He's coming.

RODNEY

Come on; beat it!

MISS HALE

No, you go. If he gets on to this thing before you get out of the house he'll have the servants stop you. You go. I'll come in a minute.

RODNEY

No, I won't leave you here; you'll be in trouble.

MISS HALE

Got a revolver? Lend it to me. (*He gives her the gun.*) No, I'm all right—hustle.

RODNEY

No, I won't!

MISS HALE

Please hurry, quick, for God's sake, please, Rodney! Think of the story—My story!

RODNEY

All right (*He goes out*).

(*MISS HALE puts her arms behind her back as if they were tied as HAMMET enters.*)

HAMMET

The patrol wagon's on its way—why, where's the officer?

MISS HALE (*in her most charming manner*)

Oh, he just stepped out.

HAMMET

Why, why—what—how—

MISS HALE

You see, dear, clever Mr. Hammet, when I came in I cut the police alarm, too. (*HAMMET is standing at the desk and lifts up the cut police wire, flabbergasted.*) That officer was my fiancé, and he also happens to be a reporter on the New York Recorder. He's on his way back to the office now with the Oklahoma Copper story and my sketch of you, confessing.

HAMMET (*going to her*)

I'll kill you!

MISS HALE (*raising the revolver*)

Not so fast. Your friend the policeman lent me this. (*She backs to the door.*)

HAMMET (*stopping*)

You little—

MISS HALE (*interrupting and taking a paper from her pocket*)

I'll leave you a copy of the speech I learned about my husband and our little son. Quite pathetic, and it wasn't so bad, was it? I hope you'll like your cell, Mr. Hammet.

MR. HAMMET

Damn you!

MISS HALE

The same to you and many of them—
(*She goes out as the curtain falls.*)



TRUTH is the most delightful thing in the world, because we can all tell it our own way.

THE SIN OF LUM SHEE

By MELVILLE CHATER

O GREAT Joss, parent of the universe, resident of enskied splendors, hear the wail of thy handmaiden, Lum Shee; for affliction is upon our house and strange things have befallen, the meaning of which I know not; wherefore, O Celestial Fount of All Knowledge, hear and give me understanding!

For I am but a simple child, knowing naught of thy great world, nor of this strange city, though it be twice twelve moons since my honored lord—for whom I pray protection—deigned to take me to his home, at which time we left our own land and sailed on the great fire junk through many waters until it rested in this clamorous port, over which the mighty Woman of Bronze uplifts her ever burning joss stick toward thee. Then, passing through streets where strange yellow devils did glide to and fro, speaking with a loud clang which much affrighted me, we reached this Celestial Apartment wherein my lord set me, charging that I should never let my feet stray into the outer world.

Judge thou, O Joss, how strictly I observed his commandment, doing naught nor thinking naught save that which lay in the words of his mouth. And judge, O Joss, when my days were accomplished and I brought forth no babe wherewith to renew his illustrious line, that I bore his just scorn and displeasure in all humility, and beweeeping my unfruitfulness, knelt often before thee, O beneficent Dispenser of Offspring, with incense and prayer, that thou mightest o'erlook thy handmaiden's unworthiness, and send her a man babe for the sake of her well deserving lord.

And, O Joss, six moons after my lord had returned unto our own land on matters of commerce, methought my prayer was answered. For as I knelt weeping before thee, with my constant petition, lo, a great woman, red-haired, of alien race, entered unheralded. She, setting a bundle upon the floor, pointed to it with no word, but closing her eye many times strangely, and went forth as in haste; and I came to the bundle and found a babe therein, at which, weeping afresh for very joy, I knelt again before thee and gave thanks for the miracle thou hadst performed.

For oh, it was a sweet man babe of our blood, with no hair upon its head, and having scarce strength to clasp, so young it was; so soft, so helpless that I took it close unto me; and the mother spake within me, though in truth I was none.

And, O Joss, another moon wasted, my lord returned to bless mine eyes again; when it was I spoke the Great Deceit, because of which, methinks, these troubles have befallen. For I, eager to regain his love, did present unto him the man babe as mine own, born in his absence; and he, receiving it in his arms with great joy, did caress and honor me once more. But thou, hearing the lie, didst mark the babe with the mark which was mine undoing. And often thereafter my lord marveled somewhat that I would never remove the little cap I had set upon its head; at which I did assure him that it would ward all evil spirits from the babe until he had come to more strength; and that such charms, once disturbed, lost all virtue. Oh, double deceit unto my guileless lord!

But woe, ah, woe! For as we sat by our window, one devil-born day, the wind entered gustily and tore the little cap from the babe's head, and red curls descended upon its shoulders; whereat I fell upon the ground before my lord, crying for mercy.

But thou, O Joss, dost know how greatly he erred when, clutching my throat till I had nigh ceased to breathe, he charged me in awful words with unfaithfulness to him—to him, my beloved lord! And with a man whose very name I knew not—one Pat Mur Fee!

"Alas, dear lord," I cried, "never have I heard of this Pat Mur Fee. Where abideth he?"

And then, with more awful words, my enraged lord saith that Pat Mur Fee abideth nearby: a man with flaming hair, like unto the babe's; upon which ground did he suspect me, oh, fruit of my Great Deceit!

And he grasped a knife and made as if to kill me; and I ran thence to the street and, guided by thy hand, O Joss, unto the door of that very Pat Mur Fee—a strong man and awful to behold—as he sat there with his wife. And I looked upon the wife and knew her for the same red-haired woman who had brought me the babe, closing her one eye so strangely.

And Pat Mur Fee, terrible yet kind withal, shielded me from the mistaken wrath of my lord, and called unto him one Lee Lo, who speaketh all tongues, that there might be converse betwixt us. Now, my lord, being quick to forgive, spake kindly unto me once more and sought to withdraw me from the presence of Pat Mur Fee. But the great Mur Fee took us both in his strong clasp; and I, eager to regain my dear lord's affection, did speak through Lee Lo to Mur Fee of his

wife's bringing of the babe, six moons past, and of the strange closing of her eye, and prayed him to prove mine honor touching himself. But he, dropping a mighty hand upon his wife, spake many things unto her quickly, and bade me lead to where the babe was.

And when we were come to the Celestial Apartment, the great Mur Fee looked first upon the playing babe, and then upon his wife and my lord, which two trembled for very fear, so wrathful was his face. And he smote the woman so that she lay senseless, and then—O Joss, visit him heavily therefor—turned upon my lord, the kindest, noblest of men, and set upon him as though possessed of ten thousand devils; whereat I fled and prayed to thee for succor.

And anon thou sentest succor from the blue giants who rule this city—a superhuman being; and he bore Pat Mur Fee away, belaboring him heavily. And other personages, though less great, laid the woman and my lord in a loudly clanging carriage and bore them away, too. And still another personage, one of much authority, took up the sweet man babe, the flower of mine eyes, and heedless of my lamentations, bore him away also. And now I am bid to attend the Place of Justice on the morrow, where the afflictions of our house will be revealed unto the common eye and these doings made clear.

Yet, I fear me, this is but the fruit of mine own wrongdoing toward my dear, much oppressed lord. And oh, I pray thee, Joss, assure him in visions of my virtue, for still, methinks, he doubts; soften his just wrath and bend his thoughts toward mercy, that he may pardon the Great Deceit and take me unto him once more!



LOVE is blind, which is no doubt the reason why lovers get along so well in the dark.

MONSEIGNEUR

By JAMES COOPER WHEELER

THE Captain of the *Santa Cruz* paused at the starboard end of the bridge and gazed sharply over the ice pack of the Bering Sea to windward. He raised his binoculars to his eyes, and half turned as he said tensely—he had been in the ice ever since leaving port, thirty-six hours before:

"Mr. Seele!"

The grizzled, burly First Officer was looking intently at the Russian passengers on the foredeck, who had been taken aboard at Nome. He stepped briskly to the Captain's side, and the latter pointed with a sinewy forefinger into the packed ice at a distance of half a mile and said:

"What do you make of the bunch on the big floe?"

The Mate leveled his glasses and answered with a puzzled expression:

"Why—why—it looks like a dead bear—"

They were interrupted by a rush of waters, and a large cake of ice that the *Santa Cruz* was slowly pushing with its blunt stem turned lazily, like a huge turtle, and opened a crevice of sparkling pale green water leading in the direction their eyes were fixed.

"Hard aport!" roared the Captain.

In a moment the voice of the Quartermaster replied:

"Wheel's hard aport, sir!"

The bow swung sluggishly to starboard, and when it neared the opening channel the autocrat called:

"Steady, as she goes!"

"Steady it is, sir!" came from the Quartermaster, as he met her and turned the ship into the widening rift. As though obeying some hidden im-

pulse, the field opened before the reinforced bow, and they neared the dirt-strewn patch of ice on which gleamed the snow white object Seele had taken for a dead polar bear.

"What in blazes—" exclaimed the Captain, wrinkling his brow in intense scrutiny. "That's a bear pelt, sure's I'm afloat; and there's something under it! Well, I'm—"

"Jiggered!" concluded the Mate.

They had simultaneously seen the oblong hump in the middle of the outspread bearskin heave and jerk, as a feeble attempt was made to toss it aside. Captain Warren pressed a button in the disk at his elbow. A bell sounded faintly below, and the screw stopped revolving. The steamer surged sluggishly forward on her previous impulse, and brought up alongside the ice floe.

"Pass a man over, Mr. Seele, and see what it is."

As the officer descended to the main deck he gave a sudden roar of anger, and sprang forward. One of the Russian passengers, a thin, active man with sparse black beard and deep blue eyes, was clambering over the bulwarks. Before Seele could reach him he sprang boldly outboard, and landed fifteen feet below on the rough snow-covered surface of the huge ice cake. He ran quickly to the skin and lifted it. The throng crowding the bulwarks heard an exclamation of amazement and joy, and the next instant he was staggering to the ship, carrying the inert form of a man clad in Eskimo garb:

"What do you think of that?" queried the black-haired Purser to Mrs. Waite, his favorite passenger.

"He is handsome—in a way," she responded, looking down at the white face upturned to the sky.

Two hours later Alfred Bills and the Purser were in the latter's roomy cabin on the port side forward of the dining salon. Mr. Mackin leaned against his standing desk contemplating a small iron chest, whose open lid disclosed a number of canvas bags of dust and nuggets that had been taken aboard at Nome. He was saying:

"Yes, sir! Three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars in that box."

Bills eyed the treasure thoughtfully. Then he drew a copy of the *Nome Gold Digger* from his pocket and remarked:

"Did you see this paragraph in the *Digger* day before yesterday?"

The Purser looked a bit disappointed at the apparent change in the subject, but answered:

"No. What is it?"

Bills read:

"The steamer *Varg*, a Norwegian vessel in the northern trade, anchored off Nome today. She landed three hundred undesirable Russian laborers—"

"Um-um, oh!" His eye traveled down the column and took up the tale again:

"Captain Boyesen says there is a report in Siberia that a convict uprising has taken place at a penal settlement four hundred miles in the interior, and the entire draft of prisoners have made their escape, first killing their guards, and then attacking an Eskimo village in the vicinity. They overpowered the natives, and stole food and dog teams, with which, it is rumored, they are making their way to the eastern coast, with the intention of crossing to United States territory."

Bills put the paper back, and said, with a quaint wrinkle at the corners of his eyes:

"If I were one of those magazine writers, instead of a city editor taking a vacation, I think there would be a story here, Mack."

There was a knock on the door, and it opened. Bills's face grew keenly interested as he viewed the man who stood on the threshold, and the Purser's took on the inscrutable expres-

sion it wore in dealings with subordinates. The newcomer's bow, despite his ragged dress, displayed ease of manner, and the acute glance of his large blue eyes seemed to take in the Purser, his friend, the gold chest and every minute detail of the apartment in their instantaneous sweep.

"Pardon my intrusion," he began in choice English, with scarcely a trace of accent. "Although I boarded you so unceremoniously this afternoon, I have means at my disposal"—here he held forth a plump buckskin poke—"and would like, if you will permit me, to purchase a deck stateroom instead of herding with the riffraff in the steerage."

His clean-shaven face expressed immeasurable disdain as he referred to his present quarters. Meeting Bills's shrewd, curious glance, he smiled whimsically, displaying a fine set of cruel-looking teeth, and added:

"I do not like the *canaille*."

Mackin was puzzled an instant, but being essentially a business man, his duty and pride was to rake every dollar he could into the coffers of the Shadrach-Hammell Company. So he replied:

"Yes, I can fit you out. It will cost you one hundred and fifty dollars to Seattle." This was double ordinary rates, but he felt that special prices should rule with passengers taken from ice floes. He concluded:

"What name shall I put down?"

"Sergius Boglovski," answered the other, with what seemed to the attentive Bills a second's hesitation. "Take it out of this."

Mackin reached down a pair of gold scales from a shelf and poured the necessary amount of coarse nuggets from the poke into the pan.

"Siberian gold, I see," he commented.

"Yes; I dug it and washed it out," returned the new passenger.

The Purser filled a blank receipt, called a steward and dismissed the Russian in his care to his stateroom.

"Where did you put him?" asked Bills.

"On the port side forward."

"Hum!" remarked the editor meditatively. "He said he was carried to sea from the Siberian coast, and his boat was smashed in the ice, didn't he?"

The Purser nodded.

"I'd like a few minutes' talk with the Captain of the *Varg*," resumed Bills.

"Why?" asked Mackin, opening his brown eyes.

"Because — because — because I would!" said Bills, taking his departure.

It happened that the stateroom allotted the Russian was next forward to the one occupied by Bills. The new passenger had apparently retired, for no light appeared through the lattice shade of his window, and the newspaper man, sitting quietly on his steamer trunk, could hear no sound.

He noiselessly adjusted the fastening of his door so that it remained slightly open. Through the crevice he gazed into the drizzle of the Arctic summer night. Two bells — eleven o'clock. Then, after a half-hour interval, three clanged from forward, and Bills suddenly raised his head and stiffened in attention.

Although he had heard no sound, someone stood at the door beyond, and he detected a faint scratch on the panel. A key turned cautiously, and the portal opened and closed again. Then came a subdued murmur of voices. Now and then he recognized a word. The Russian and his stealthy visitor were conversing in French.

The alert Bills did not understand the language, but was aware that educated Russians used it rather than their native tongue. He heard again the voice that had been raised in joy at the discovery of the body under the bearskin. Once it came clearly, and he was sure it said:

"Monseigneur!"

The visitor seemed to be protesting respectfully against some plan the other had determined upon. Two other words the newspaper man caught that he was sure of.

"D'or!"

The round vowel and Gallic twist of the "r" could not be mistaken, and Bills thought of the treasure below in the Purser's iron chest, but half smiled at his absurdity, as he recalled that it weighed something like half a ton. Then came in the trenchant tone of the man with the cruel teeth:

"*Il faut! Nécessité!*"

Bills understood that, and set his jaws, while the wrinkles came out on his forehead. Was he stirring up a mare's nest, and could his news instinct, in him a sixth sense, be misleading for once?

Shortly after midnight the key grated again in the lock and the visitor departed. The editor managed to get a view of him against the sky this time, and identified him as the active individual who had been so ready to leap on the ice floes.

After a short interval he followed softly, and at the iron railing which looks down on the main deck he found the First Officer. Seele raised his hand as Bills was about to speak, and pointed to a group of four men huddled in the chocks of the bow on the main deck. Monseigneur's visitor was talking, and the others heeding so earnestly they did not observe they were being watched.

"I don't savvy that crowd, Bills," whispered Seele. "They look more like conspirators than Russian laborers."

At that moment one of the quartet, a tall man wearing a shabby Cossack tunic, glanced up. He saw the officer and Bills, and said sharply: "Ivan!"

The leader looked around, and at the same instant made a rapid sign with the fingers of his left hand. The compact group fell apart, as if a scene had been shifted, and four individuals lounged naturally enough toward the entrance of the scuttle leading to the steerage.

When Bills came on deck in the morning to make his customary mile before breakfast, he found the good ship *Santa Cruz* lunging ahead through

an open sea at the rate of fifteen knots an hour.

"We're out of the ice," said Captain Warren, as he came down from the bridge, weary-eyed but smiling; "and we'll lie tonight at Unalaska."

The Seattle newspaper man visited the Purser again that morning, and Mackin was amused by his curious interest in the treasure chest. After Bills had discovered that it had an impregnable lock and was bolted down to the deck, the Purser finally observed to his taciturn friend:

"If I did not know who you are, old man, I should think you were figuring to get away with that bullion."

"I don't see how it could possibly be accomplished," answered the city editor, with a curious satisfaction in his tone that mystified the official.

During the day Mr. Seele and Bills held several conferences. At the conclusion of one in the Mate's cabin, they emerged abruptly, and found "Monseigneur" leaning against the lintel of the stateroom door, idly gazing at the great bare hump of one of the Aleutian Islands in the distance.

At this unexpected occurrence they both looked taken aback, but the Russian seemed not to notice, and strolled nonchalantly forward, where shortly after he had a talk with his visitor of the evening previous.

After he had gone, Bills said to Seele:

"That fellow is sharper than chain lightning! I wonder if he heard us?"

"I give it up," answered the Mate resignedly.

At five o'clock the steamer was moored to the pier at the foot of the little land-locked harbor of Unalaska. The passengers had streamed ashore and were examining with interest the Greek chapel with its square tower and three-barred cross, the cabins and the huge, stranded Yukon freight boat that lay high and dry on the beach at the farther end of the settlement. A schooner of some fifty tons lay trim and taut at anchor in front of her. As Bills and the Mate passed after dinner on their way to the hillside graveyard,

they idly noted that, though she seemed to be in commission, there was no one aboard.

"Some fellow going north to trade with the natives," explained the officer.

On their way back they met Captain Warren, and turned into the harbor-master's snug quarters, where they spent a couple of hours looking at the curios he had gathered during his incumbency. Then Bills said he would go aboard and turn in.

He said good night and started off, but he did not reach the ship that night. As he stepped into the black shadow of the storehouse at the beginning of the dock, he was tackled from behind. A sinewy arm thrown about his neck pulled him backward, and simultaneously another assailant grasped his feet. Before he had time to let out a howl for aid, he was gagged and bound securely. His captors carried him to the rear of the building and laid him between the wall and the stringpiece of the dock.

An hour later the Captain and his First Officer passed along. The unfortunate man heard them conversing and made heroic efforts to attract their attention, but he did not succeed.

After an interval he heard the ship's bell strike eight times for midnight. No other sound except the wash of the waters against the piles broke the silence. Bills lay on his left side, and by stretching his neck he could look out over the bay. In the all-night twilight of these northern latitudes he discerned the little trading schooner swinging at its anchor.

One bell—two bells—three bells—four bells! Two o'clock, and the cramped prisoner suddenly listened eagerly. Surely that was a faint splash! Then he heard with certainty the working of a pair of muffled oars in the rowlocks. With an effort he raised his head above the stringpiece.

A fishing dory, such as is commonly used in the tempestuous waters of the Bering Sea, was gliding athwart the line of his vision to the bow of the *Santa Cruz*. His straining ears de-

tected a sound he construed to be a rope from aloft striking the bottom of the boat. After this all was still.

Years seemed to pass, and then every nerve in Bills's tortured body quivered as the half-hour boomed out on the ship's bell. Shortly he heard the muffled oar strokes again, and saw the dory pulled by two men heading for the schooner. The iron chest he had last seen in the Purser's stateroom was on the after thwart. The boat was not a hundred yards distant, and he was sure his eyesight did not deceive him.

This marvelous occurrence so wrought upon the excited man that he made a last mighty struggle to free himself from his bonds. His frenzied efforts loosened the gag, and he let out a yell that split the air:

"Ahoy, the *Santa Cruz*! Help! Thieves! Monseigneur!"

There was an instant commotion on the steamer. As he realized that fact he noted for the first time that the sky was covered with scurrying black clouds. As a vivid flash of lightning tore across them, he saw the dory swinging from the schooner's davits. The jib of the trader was fluttering in the wind, and the mainsail was rising to the peak. He tried to call out again, but his voice failed him, and he fell back in a swoon.

The Captain and First Officer met as they burst out of their doors, the latter revolver in hand. Seele made for Bills's stateroom, and with a wrench tore the door open. Empty!

"It was Bills's voice!" he exclaimed.

Before the latter could reply, the watchman called from the starboard side at the gangway leading to the pier:

"This way! That yell came from the freight house!"

The clouds opened, and the rain fell in torrents as they followed him. Seele was the quickest, despite his bulk. He lifted up the editor. The dash of rain brought the latter to his senses, and he sat up as his bonds were cast loose. Then he sprang to his feet and shouted, pointing excitedly from the *Santa Cruz* to the schooner:

"The Purser! The treasure! The schooner! Monseigneur!"

As he screeched the last word he collapsed again, and fell back in the watchman's arms.

"Take care of him," said the Mate hurriedly. "Come, Captain!"

They found Mackin senseless in his bunk, bound hand and foot, and reeking with the fumes of the opium that had taken his senses. The bullion chest was missing, and the deck was splintered and rent where it had been bolted down.

Without a pause, the burly First Officer sprang to the deck again, followed by the Captain. Amid a deafening clap of thunder, they gazed over the rail to the northward, and by the following flash saw the trading schooner with every rag set, scudding toward the mouth of the harbor before the fierce northeasterly blast.



LIFE'S GREATEST SPECULATION

MARRIAGE—Life's speculative show, its hazardous game of chance, its riskiest lottery, its daringest venture into unlit night; despite which egotistical humans fearlessly and even complacently continue to engage in it.

THE AUTUMNAL SPIRIT

By HAMILTON POPE GALT

THE lazy days have gone their ways,
The lazy, hazy days;
The creepy winds, the languid kinds,
The creepy, sleepy winds,
Are passed and done; and now the sun,
The zealous, jealous sun,
Must share domain with night again,
Must pair and share again.

And mark ye how the wind blows now!
And mark ye, hark ye, how
The clouds on high rush through the sky,
And racing, chasing, fly!
How whines the whip to make them skip,
The bristling, whistling whip,
To make them leap o'er the sky's blue deep
Like driven, riven sheep!

The lagging things now fold their wings,
The lagging, tagging things;
And rustling Fall sounds over all
His hustling, bustling call.
The vig'rous air, so crisp and fair,
The vig'rous, rig'rous air,
Goes bowling at each rolling hat,
Each rolling, bowling hat!

THE KINDLY FLAME

By HAROLD EYRE

"THERE is something in your lengthy visage, *mon petit*, that is distinctly inappropriate to my optimistic mood. It savors, indeed, of ingratitude. Do you not realize that Fortune smiles upon us? I may say, even, that she chuckles! Have we not just dined like princes, and at an expense in complete accord with our financial status? Not in the gilded *salons* of La Riche, nor amid the depressing elegance of the Café de Paris, could one be served with more exquisite Lyons sausage than that which has disappeared so rapidly from our respective plates, and which cost sixty centimes at the *charcuterie* of the Place Maubert. With that, half a yard of bread and three sous' worth of *escarole* as a salad, what more could mortal desire? Nothing save coffee, and it seemed to me that the coffee tonight was brewed with more than my usual perfection. Stay, I was forgetting the wine, this excellent Château of the Grocery! I counsel you to try another glass to revive your drooping spirits. It is not as bad as it tastes, and there is a headache in every three glasses; to expect more at half a franc the liter would be unreasonable."

"*Farceur!*" retorted Laurent, with a melancholy smile. "It is easy for you to talk, but life is not all *saucisse de Lyons* and coffee—even your coffee."

"So much the worse for life. But thou art right, O sage. There are other things worth while in this round world. Art, for instance. Which reminds me that I have this day achieved a little masterpiece, a romance, *mon vieux*, that De Maupassant himself would have been proud to acknowledge as his own.

It combines his crystallized inevitability with suggestions of Théodore de Banville and of Victor Hugo, but without Théodore's fuliginous nebulosity or the windy exuberance of our beloved Victor. Presently, if you can gather your moonstruck wits into a semblance of intelligence, I shall read it to you. It will improve your mind and may give you inspiration for a picture. That is something that you need, an inspiration, for I have observed of late a deplorable sameness in your canvases. One would think there was only one woman's face in the world."

"To me there is but one."

"Oh, sublime lunacy of youth! Still harping upon our friend upstairs? My son, you are hopeless. After your long association with me I had expected better things of you. Have you not yet learned that the disciple of art has no right to fall in love? He should avoid it as he would the small-pox. In fact, of the two diseases smallpox is much safer, for you can have that but once, while falling in love almost invariably becomes a habit."

"She is so beautiful," murmured the painter irrelevantly.

"Bah! So was Cleopatra. So is the Venus de Milo."

"You are absurd, Gustave. One does not fall in love with a mummy, nor with a statue in the Louvre."

"Then it is a pity one does not. There would be fewer promising careers nipped in the bud. And this divinity of yours must be cold as the whitest of marble. Have you not assailed her for over a month, in passing on the stairs or at the door, with glances that would touch the heart of a pawnbroker?"

And has she not refused to recognize your existence by so much as the movement of an eyelash? It does not appeal to me, that sort of thing. For me a little warmth and responsiveness, a disposition to meet one at least half-way. A woman living alone in a dilapidated rookery like this should not assume the airs of a duchess. But they are proud as Lucifer, those Americans. Why, in the name of Rubens, did you select a member of that frostbitten race to make sheep's eyes at? Are there not enough charming creatures of our own nation to be found in Paris—and that without troubling to cross the Pont Neuf? Nay, even in this prosaic Rue du Sommerard I have observed more than one inviting possibility. But an American! *Nom d'une pipe!* Have you no patriotism?"

"In affairs of the heart," remarked the young man, visibly nettled, "one does not think of nationality. And you, my dear Gustave, have hardly the right to sermonize on such a topic. You are no Saint Anthony yourself, *par exemple!* Have you forgotten the English dancer at La Cigale?"

"It is true, I had forgotten. But there was no sentiment in that trifling episode; it was merely that I wished to extend my knowledge of the English tongue."

"And the Arabian damsel in the perfumery shop of the Rue St. Honoré! You were studying Arabic, perhaps."

"What a memory you have! I had forgotten her, also. Ah, she was interesting, that little Oriental! She had a history, but of the strangest. Some day, when you are more mature, I may tell you her story. In your present stage of development it would be unfit for your young ears. But to resume, my good Romeo. Have you made no progress at all with this perambulating iceberg?"

"None, so far."

"*Tiens!* You have not even spoken to her?"

"The occasion has not presented itself. She is not of the kind one can

address haphazard. There is a dignity about her—"

"Ah, yes, I have seen it before, that dignity!"

"Yesterday," continued Laurent, ignoring the interruption, "I thought the opportunity had arrived. In passing me on the landing, she dropped her key. But before I could pick it up, she had already done so."

"A striking example of racial differences. No Frenchwoman would have been so lacking in *savoir-faire*. She is hopeless, your American, with no perception of the fine amenities of life. Tell me, is it really so serious—joking apart?"

"Gustave," replied the young man solemnly, "I would give years of my life to know her, even as the merest acquaintance, to be privileged to speak to her for but ten short minutes."

Gustave regarded his friend for a moment and shrugged his shoulders. "*ma foi,*" he said gravely, "it is a bad attack. I fear you will not be convalescent for at least three weeks."

"*Diantre!*" exploded the painter. "Why do you laugh at everything?"

"It is the only way I can forget that the rent is unpaid. Come, melancholy one, pull yourself together! Let us sally forth to have a liqueur at the Vachette, where I may present you to some young persons whom you will find more sociable than this glacial charmer who picks up her keys."

Laurent shook his head. "No use in my going; you would only find me depressing. It is foolish, I know, but I am not myself at all. I cannot work; I cannot study. I no longer find pleasure even in wasting time. Ah, how unhappy I am! If I could only break the ice—"

"Yes, I know. You have said that before, but it seems that as a breaker of ice you are not a success. What is this girl doing in the Quarter?"

"Studying, of course. I haven't been able to discover whether it is music or art."

Gustave had put on his hat. "Do you want my opinion?" he inquired, his hand on the doorknob.

"Yes; what do you think?"

"That she is a pupil at the School of Dentistry."

Neatly evading a book which the indignant sentimentalist flung at his head, Gustave disappeared.

Left alone, Laurent sat buried in thought. It seemed absurd, uncivilized almost, that two people living under the same roof should not be on speaking terms. Yet how was he to proceed? If it were not for his idiotic diffidence, the matter would be simple. He considered attentively the comparative merits of certain plans he had conceived whereby he might, without an introduction, but in a discreet and gentlemanly manner, form the acquaintance of the fair American. The plans were all ingenious, with but one defect, as he perceived upon deliberation: that each called for rather more self-possession and assurance than he could muster.

Sadly dismissing that phase of the subject, he drew from his pocket a sheet of paper containing the rough draft of a poem entitled "To My Beautiful Unknown." With the aid of a drawing pencil and Gustave's rhyming dictionary, the young painter set to work to revise and polish his stanzas. After two hours of labor the task of reconstruction was complete, and the poem was, if possible, slightly worse than before. But of this Laurent had no suspicion, and as he prepared for bed he declaimed aloud certain lines that especially pleased him.

In the middle of the night Laurent was awakened by a vigorous shaking of the shoulders.

"It appears," said the voice of his friend, "that this domicile is on fire and our valuable household effects and objects of art are in grave danger of destruction. The *concierge* has gone to warn the authorities, and unless the efficiency of the Paris fire department has declined, the fighters of flames will be here within the hour. Meanwhile, we had better get our things together. It is unfortunate, is it not, that our insurance policy lapsed some years ago—a sad example of the evils of procrastina-

tion! We must have it renewed to-morrow without fail."

"But the girl upstairs—the young American!" cried Laurent, jumping out of bed.

Gustave was calmly packing up. "Ah! doubtless she will be saved. Where on earth is the coffee pot?"

"To the devil with your coffee pot! *Mon Dieu*, if she should be in danger!" In a frenzy of haste the young man put on his clothes and rushed upstairs through the smoke.

The morning following the fire was spent by Gustave in seeking another lodging for himself and his friend, for though little damage had been done, their house was for the time being untenable. Having found a suitable room in the Rue de la Sorbonne and arranged for the transfer of their effects, he encountered the young artist in the early afternoon at the Café d' Harcourt.

Laurent's face beamed. "*Mon ami*, the ice is broken at last! I have made her acquaintance. She is adorable!"

"My compliments! But what became of you after your heroic rescue? I was beginning to think you had eloped with her."

"It was not heroic," corrected Laurent, flushing. "There was no danger for me, although she insisted that there was. When I got her out of the house, the poor child was homeless. Imagine it to yourself—homeless in Paris, at three o'clock in the morning! One could not leave her in the street!"

"Obviously one could not."

"It seems she has friends on the other side of the Seine, in the *Étoile* quarter but people of quality, *mon vieux*! So I took her there in a *fiacre*—"

"Where did you get the money?" inquired Gustave, with an air of astonishment.

"In a *fiacre*," repeated Laurent sternly. "This morning we met by appointment and breakfasted together, and she is going to sit for me for a portrait. Ah, how she is charming! Not cold or stiff, as you imagined; it was simply that being alone in the Quarter

and unaccustomed to our ways, she kept to herself, not wishing to form promiscuous acquaintances. And to think that I might have lived in the same house for years, without ever knowing her, if that blessed fire had not occurred! Did you ever hear of such luck? Nay, it was more than luck; it was a miracle!"

Gustave could contain himself no longer.

"Behold," he cried, striking his chest

triumphantly, "the author of that miracle!"

His friend regarded him in bewilderment.

"Was it not an inspired idea? Was it not worthy of the Little Corporal himself? *Sacré nom d'un chien!* Have you lost your tongue?"

"But—you don't mean—that you—"

"Of course I did! As if that absurd old house would have had the enterprise to set itself on fire!"



SONG OF THE ROAD

By ARTHUR WALLACE PEACH

HO, for the voice of the winds,
 Calling the freeborn far,
 O'er the crest of the earth to a kingly birth,
 Friends with the northern star!

Ho, for the sunny world,
 Blossom and bird and bee,
 For the song of the streams, the cool night dreams,
 The lure of the sky-rimmed sea!

Ho, for the red of the blood,
 Stirring the restless heart,
 For the brave who would stray o'er the world's great way
 Down where the dawn tides start!

Ho, for the voice of the road,
 Calling the pilgrim far,
 O'er the crest of the earth to a kingly birth,
 Friends with the northern star!



FOOLS drop suggestions and wise men pick them up. Sometimes we burn our fingers.



DISCRETION is the mother of friendship.

LES FIANÇAILLES

Par LEO LARGUIER

M. JEAN DIDELOT, professeur au Muséum, et sa fille Angélique achevaient leur repas du soir, ce tiède crépuscule de juin, dans l'humble salle à manger dont on n'avait pas encore allumé la lampe, car sept heures sonnaient à peine.

Le savant, se couchant tôt, dînait régulièrement vers six heures, puis sa fille lui faisait un peu de lecture, et à neuf heures il dormait comme un enfant.

La pièce où ils se tenaient était plutôt un cabinet de travail qu'une salle à manger, car des livres la tapissaient de haut en bas.

Sur les rayons de bois blanc passés au brou de noix étaient posés des échantillons, des minéraux, quelques fossiles, et, sur la nappe de la table, le dessous de plat lui-même était un bloc carré de schiste noir, empreint d'un admirable rameau de fougère dont les feuilles pétrifiées depuis des millénaires avaient brillé, sous d'abondantes rosées, à l'aube des temps.

La fenêtre s'ouvrait sur le Jardin des Plantes, et, comme l'appartement était au cinquième, on voyait au premier plan une houle de feuillages; plus loin, des toits et des tours, et enfin tout au fond du large panorama, frappé par les lumières mourantes du jour, le Sacré-Cœur, qui semblait sur sa colline une blanche ascension de nuages arrêtés, figés et sculptés selon la forme d'une basilique byzantine ou d'un vague Kremlin.

Des fraises embaumaient la table, et sans rien dire, Angélique se leva et marcha vers un coin de la pièce.

Elle était grande et mince et, lorsqu'elle passait devant la croisée, ses cheveux blonds se vaporisaient, devenaient

une fumée lumineuse, et le tulle transparent de ses manches montrait ses beaux bras rosés, minces et ronds.

Elle revint s'asseoir avec un livre.

M. Didelot alluma une pipe, la seule qu'il se permit de la journée. . . .

—C'est cela, petite, tu as deviné . . . c'est Michelet, n'est-ce pas? Tu n'avais pas achevé ce chapitre sur la *frégate*, hier; veux-tu continuer?

Angélique ouvrit le volume, chercha un instant, et sa belle voix jeune s'éleva dans le silence de la pièce:

—Voici, père; nous nous étions arrêtés à la page 48. . . .

Et elle se mit à lire:

Mais le temps noir se dissipe, le jour reparait, je vois un petit point bleu au ciel. Heureuse et sereine région qui gardait la paix par-dessus l'orage. Dans ce point bleu, royalement, un petit oiseau d'aile immense nage à dix mille pieds de haut. Goéland? non, l'aile est noire. Aigle? non, l'oiseau est petit.

C'est le petit aigle de mer, le premier de la race ailée, l'audacieux navigateur qui ne ploie jamais la voile, le prince de la tempête, contempteur de tous les dangers: le guerrier ou la frégate. . . .

Louise, la vieille bonne, coupa la phrase prestigieuse en ouvrant la porte sans frapper:

—Lili, veux-tu venir une minute?

Elle était depuis plus de quinze ans chez M. Didelot, et avait élevé Angélique. Gouvernante et cuisinière, elle était chez elle et on ne lui payait même pas ses gages!

Avec une dizaine de mille francs laissés par son mari et grâce à quelques bourses, elle avait fait instruire son fils Jacques Bonvalet, un grand garçon timide qui venait de découvrir dans le

pliocène inférieur un fossile dont on parlait beaucoup entre la rue Cuvier et la gare d'Orléans et dans les revues de géologie et d'histoire naturelle.

Il était entré au Muséum, aux appointements de deux mille huit qui suffisaient largement à sa jeunesse de savant.

Tous les dimanches, il partageait le diner de M. Didelot, et chaque jour, il arrivait vers huit heures, demeurait un moment, embrassait sa mère et repartait.

Ce soir-là, si le professeur eût été moins distrait, il eût deviné qu'on tramait quelque chose dans la cuisine; mais il regardait vers le cédre du jardin, noir et religieux dans l'azur où il croyait voir flotter la phrase de Michelet. Louise revint seule, ôta un couvert, regarda fixement son vieux maître, toussa et s'assit. . . .

—Monsieur Didelot!

—Quoi, ma bonne?

—Posez ce bouquin et écoutez-moi. Vous êtes un grand savant, j'ai entendu des amis de Jacques qui parlaient l'autre jour de vous comme d'un saint . . . mais . . . vous êtes un enfant. . . .

Le professeur eut un sourire candide et étonné.

—Vous avez, paraît-il, trouvé beaucoup de choses, mon fils dit que vous avez été très loin, mais . . . pour le moment, il faudrait regarder un peu plus près de vous.

—Il y a quinze ans que je vous sers. Quinze ans, cela fait cent quatre-vingts mois; à cinquante francs par mois, cela fait neuf mille francs . . . Je vous dis cela crûment parce que je n'ai pas d'instruction, mais ce n'est pas cela que je voulais dire. Je ne demande rien . . . Mon Dieu, qu'il est difficile de s'exprimer! . . ."

La bonne femme était émue, et le professeur stupéfait.

—Enfin, voilà, reprit-elle, Angélique a vingt et un ans. . . . Jacques en a vingt-huit. . . . Comprenez-vous?

Et elle se sauva toute rouge et les yeux pleins de larmes prêtes à couler.

A ce moment, on sonna, et ce fut Angélique qui alla ouvrir, parce que Louise pleurait dans la cuisine.

Jacques Bonvalet entra.

—Bonsoir, mademoiselle Angélique. Comment va le maître?

—Bonsoir, monsieur Jacques. Voulez-vous passer dans la salle à manger, papa est en train de lire et j'aide votre mère. Excusez-moi, je vais venir. . . .

* * *

Lorsque Jacques Bonvalet entra, il trouva son maître debout, regardant attentivement le tapis.

Le vieillard releva la tête en entendant le jeune professeur.

—Ah! vous voilà, mon ami. . . . J'ai quelque chose à vous dire. . . . Lili! Lili! appela-t-il.

Angélique apparut toute rose dans le cadre de la porte.

—Donne ta main, petite, et vous, Jacques, donnez la vôtre. . . . Maintenant embrassez-vous, je connais votre secret!

Ils ne s'embrassèrent pas, mais ils s'assirent l'un contre l'autre. Louise, avec la lampe, apporta sa corbeille à ouvrage; des petites tasses chinoises s'élevaient de légères fumées, et Angélique, la main dans celle de son fiancé, se remit à lire la suite du chapitre, tandis que sur le Jardin des Plantes, devenu noir, des hirondelles invisibles à cause de la nuit peuplaient l'ombre chaude, flottant avec mille petits cris qui devaient dire, dans la langue des oiseaux, la joie immense de la liberté, de l'amour, la volupté de se laisser bercer par deux ailes, sous les étoiles qui ensemençaient l'azur estival de millions de grains d'or.



LA louange tardive est égale à l'affront.

H A V O C

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM

Synopsis of Previous Chapters

Arthur Dorward, a young American journalist in Vienna, secures for his paper a great "beat"—a full account of a private conference between the Emperor and the Czar, and attempts to get out of the country with his valuable papers. On the train with him is David Bellamy, an English diplomatic agent, and also several Austrian secret service men. During the night Dorward is attacked by the Austrians, thrown from the train and his papers taken from him. Bellamy then plots to secure the papers for himself and enlists the help of Louise Idiale, a Servian opera singer, who proceeds at once to encourage the attentions of Von Behrling, in charge of the Austrian party, and finally induces him to agree to sell the papers to the English government. He turns over to Bellamy a packet, found to contain only blank paper, for which the English have paid twenty thousand pounds, and Bellamy is thereby discredited. Baron Streuss visits the latter and Mlle. Idiale and is informed that Von Behrling has just been found murdered.

This novel began in the September **SMART SET**. Back copies of the magazine may be had from any newsdealer or the publishers.

XII

THE Baron adjusted his eyeglass with shaking fingers. His face now was waxen white as he spread out the newspaper upon the table and read the paragraph word by word.

TERRIBLE CRIME IN THE CITY

Early this morning the body of a man was discovered in a narrow passageway leading from Crooked Friars to Royal Street, under circumstances which leave little doubt that the man's death was owing to foul play. The deceased had apparently been stabbed, and had received several severe blows about the head. He was shabbily dressed but was well supplied with money, and he was wearing a gold watch and chain when he was found.

LATER

There appears to be no further doubt that the man found in the entry leading from Crooked Friars had been the victim of a particularly murderous assault. Neither his clothes nor his linen bore any mark by means of which he could be identified. The body has been removed to the nearest mortuary, and an inquest will shortly be held.

Streuss looked up from the newspaper and the reality of his surprise was apparent. He had all the appearance of a man shaken with emotion. While he

looked at his two companions wonderingly, strange thoughts were forming in his mind.

"Von Behrling dead!" he muttered. "But who—who could have done this?"

"Until this moment," Bellamy answered drily, "it was not a matter concerning which we had any doubt. The only wonder to us was that it should have been done too late."

"You mean," Streuss said slowly, "that he was murdered after he had completed his bargain with you?"

"Naturally."

"I suppose," the Baron continued, "there is no question but that it was done afterwards? You smile," he exclaimed, "but what am I to think? Neither I nor my people had any hand in this deed. How about yours?"

Bellamy shook his head. "We do not fight that way," he replied. "I had bought Von Behrling. He was of no further interest to me. I did not care whether he lived or died."

"There is something very strange about this," the Baron said. "If neither you nor I was responsible for his death, who was?"

"That I can't tell you. Perhaps later

in the day we shall hear from the police. It is scarcely the sort of murder which would remain long undetected, especially as he was robbed of a large sum in bank-notes."

"Supplied by His Majesty's Government, I presume?" Streuss remarked.

"Precisely," Bellamy assented; "and paid to him by me."

"At any rate," Streuss said grimly, "we have now no more secrets from one another. I will ask you one last question. Where is that packet at the present moment?"

Bellamy raised his eyebrows. "It is a question," he declared, "which you scarcely expect me to answer."

"I will put it another way," Streuss continued. "Supposing you decide to accept my offer, how long will it be before the packet can be placed in my hands?"

"If we decide to accept," Bellamy answered, "there is no reason why there should be any delay at all."

Streuss was silent for several moments. His hands were thrust deep down into the pockets of his overcoat. With eyes fixed upon the tablecloth, he seemed to be thinking deeply. Presently he raised his head and looked steadily at Bellamy.

"You are sure that Von Behrling has not fooled you? You are sure that you have that identical packet?"

"I am absolutely certain that I have," Bellamy answered, without flinching.

"Then accept my price and have done with this matter," Streuss begged. "I will sign a draft for you here, and I will undertake to bring you the money, or honor it wherever you say, within twenty-four hours."

"I cannot decide so quickly," said Bellamy, shaking his head. "Mademoiselle Idiale and I must talk together first. I am not sure," he added, "whether I might not find a higher bidder."

Streuss laughed mirthlessly. "There is little fear of that," he said. "The papers are of no use except to us and to England. To England, I will admit, the foreknowledge of what is to come would be worth much, although the eventful result would be the same. It is

for that reason that I am here, for that reason that I have made you this offer."

"Mademoiselle and I must discuss it," Bellamy declared. "It is not a matter to be decided upon offhand. Remember that it is not only the packet which you are offering to buy, but also my career and my honor."

"One hundred thousand pounds," Streuss said slowly. "From your own side you get nothing—nothing but your beggarly salary and an occasional reprimand. One hundred thousand pounds is not immense wealth, but it is something."

"Your offer is a generous one," admitted Bellamy; "there is no doubt about that. On the other hand, I cannot decide without further consideration. It is a big thing for us, remember. I have worked very hard for the contents of that packet."

Once more Streuss felt an uneasy pang of incredulity. After all, was this Englishman playing with him? So he asked: "You are quite sure that you have it?"

"There is no means of convincing you of which I care to make use. You must be content with my word. I have the packet. I paid Von Behrling for it and he gave it to me with his own hands."

"I must accept your word," Streuss declared. "I give you three days for reflection. Before I go, Mr. Bellamy, forgive me if I refer once more to this"—touching the newspaper which still lay upon the table. "Remember that Rudolph Von Behrling moved about a marked man. Your spies and mine were most of the time upon his heels. Yet in the end some third person seems to have intervened. Are you quite sure that you know nothing of this?"

"Upon my honor," Bellamy replied, "I have not the slightest information concerning Von Behrling's death beyond what you can read there. It was as great a surprise to me as to you."

"It is incomprehensible," Streuss murmured.

"One can only conclude," Bellamy remarked thoughtfully, "that someone must have seen him with those notes. There were people moving about in the little restaurant where we met. The

rustle of banknotes has cost more than one man his life."

"For the present," Streuss said, "we must believe that it was so. Listen to me, both of you. You will be wiser if you do not delay. You are young people, and the world is before you. With money one can do everything. Without it, life is but slavery. The world is full of beautiful dwelling places for those who have the means to choose. Remember, too, that not a soul will ever know of this transaction if you should decide to accept my offer."

"We shall remember all those things," Bellamy assured him.

Streuss took up his hat and gloves. "With your permission, then, *mademoiselle*," he concluded, turning to Louise, "I go. I must try and understand for myself the meaning of this thing which has happened to Von Behrling."

"Do not forget," Bellamy said, "that if you discover anything, we are equally interested."

They heard him go out. Bellamy purposely held the door open until he saw the lift descend. Then he closed it firmly and came back into the room. Louise and he looked at each other, their faces full of anxious questioning.

"What does it mean?" Louise cried. "What can it mean?"

"Heaven alone knows!" Bellamy answered. "There is not a gleam of daylight. My people are absolutely innocent of any attempt upon Von Behrling. If Streuss tells the truth, and I believe he does, his people are in the same position. Who, then, in the name of all that is miraculous, can have murdered and robbed Von Behrling?"

"In London, too!" Louise murmured. "It is not Vienna, this, or Belgrade."

"You are right," Bellamy agreed. "London is one of the most law-abiding cities in Europe. Besides, the quarter where the murder occurred is entirely unfrequented by the criminal classes. It is simply a region of great banks and the offices of merchant princes."

"Is it possible that there is someone else who knew about that document," Louise asked—"someone else who has been watching Von Behrling?"

Bellamy shook his head. "How can that be? Besides, if others were really on his track, they must have believed that he had parted with it to me. I shall go back now to Downing Street to ask for a letter to the Chief of Scotland Yard. If anything comes out, I must have plenty of warning."

"And I," she said, with an approving nod, "shall go back to bed again. These days are too strenuous for me. Won't you stay and take your coffee with me?"

Bellamy held her hand for a moment in his. "Dear," he said, "I would stay, but you understand what a maze this is into which we have wandered. Von Behrling has been murdered by persons who seem to have dropped from the skies. Whoever they may be, they have in their possession my twenty thousand pounds and the packet which should have been mine. I must trace them if I can, Louise. It is a poor chance, but I must do my best. I myself am of the opinion that Von Behrling was murdered for the money, and for the money only. If so, that packet may be in the hands of people who have no idea what use to make of it. They may even destroy it. If Streuss returns and you are forced to see him, be careful. Remember, we have the document—we are hesitating. So long as he believes that it is in our possession, he will not look elsewhere."

"I will be careful," Louise promised, with her arms around his neck. "And dear, take care. When I think of poor Rudolph Von Behrling, I tremble also for you. It seems to me that your danger is no less than his."

"I do not go about with twenty thousand pounds in my pocketbook," he said with a smile.

She shook her head. "No, but Streuss believes that you have the document which he is pledged to recover. Be careful that they do not lead you into a trap. They are not above anything, these men. I heard once of a Bulgarian in Vienna who was tortured—tortured almost to death—before he spoke. Then they thrust him into a lunatic asylum. Remember, dear, they have no consciences and no pity."

"We are in London," he reminded her.

"So was Von Behrling," she answered quickly—"not only in London but in a safe part of London. Yet he is dead."

"It was not their doing," he declared. "In their own country they have the whole machinery of their wonderful police system at their backs and no fear of the law in their hearts. Here they must needs go cautiously. I don't think you need be afraid," he added, smiling, as he opened the door. "I think I can promise you that if you will do me the honor we will sup together tonight."

"You must fetch me from the Opera House," Louise insisted. "It is a bargain. I have suffered enough neglect at your hands. One thing, David—where do you go first from here?"

"To find the man," Bellamy answered gravely, "who was watching Von Behrling when he left me. If any man in England knows anything of the murder, it must be he. He should be at my rooms by now."

XIII

STEPHEN LAVERICK was a bachelor—his friends called him an incorrigible one. He had a small but pleasantly situated suite of rooms in Whitehall Court, looking out upon the river. His habits were almost monotonous in their regularity, and the morning following his late night in the city was no exception to the general rule. At eight o'clock, the valet attached to the suite knocked at his door and informed him that his bath was ready. He awoke at once from a sound sleep, sat up in bed and remembered the events of the preceding evening.

At first he was inclined to doubt that slowly stirring effort of memory. He was a man of unromantic temperament, unimaginative and by no means of an adventurous turn of mind. He sought naturally for the most reasonable explanation of this strange picture, which no effort of his will could dismiss from his memory. It was a dream, of course.

But the dream did not fade. Slowly it spread itself out so that he could no longer doubt. He knew very well as he sat there on the edge of his bed that the thing was truth. He, Stephen Laverick, a man hitherto of upright character, with a reputation of which unconsciously he was proud, had robbed a dead man, had looked into the burning eyes of his murderer, had stolen away with twenty thousand pounds of someone else's money. Morally, at any rate, probably legally as well, he was a thief. A glimpse inside his safe on the part of an astute detective might very easily bring him under the grave suspicion of being a criminal of altogether deeper dye.

Stephen Laverick was, in his way, something of a philosopher. In the cold daylight, with the sound of the water running into his bath, this deed which he had done seemed to him foolish and reprehensible. Nevertheless, he realized the absolute finality of his action. The thing was done; he must make the best of it. Behaving in every way like a sensible man, he did not send for the newspapers and search hysterically for their account of last night's tragedy, but took his bath as usual, dressed with more than ordinary care and sat down to his breakfast before he even unfolded the paper. The item for which he searched occupied by no means so prominent a position as he had expected. It appeared under one of the leading headlines, but it consisted of only a few words. He read them with interest but without emotion. Afterwards he turned to the Stock Exchange quotations and made notes of a few prices in which he was interested.

He completed in leisurely fashion an excellent breakfast and followed his usual custom of walking along the Embankment as far as the Royal Hotel, where he called a taxicab and drove to his offices. A little crowd had gathered around the end of the passage which led from Crooked Friars, and Laverick himself leaned forward and looked curiously at the spot where the body of the murdered man had lain. It seemed hard to him to reconstruct last night's scene in

his mind now that the narrow street was filled with hurrying men and a stream of vehicles blocked every inch of the roadway. In his early morning mood the thing was impossible. In a moment or two he paid his driver and dismissed him.

He fancied that a certain relief was visible among his clerks when he opened the door at precisely his usual time and with a cheerful "Good morning" made his way into the private office. He lit his customary cigarette and dealt rapidly with the correspondence which was brought in to him by his head clerk. Afterward, as soon as he was alone, he opened the safe, thrust the contents of that inner drawer into his breast pocket and took up once more his hat and gloves.

"I am going around to the bank," he told his clerk as he passed out. "I shall be back in half an hour—perhaps less."

"Very good, sir," the man answered. "Will Mr. Morrison be here this morning?"

Laverick hesitated. "No, Mr. Morrison will not be here today."

It was only a few steps to his bankers, and his request for an interview with the manager was immediately granted. The latter received him kindly but with a certain restraint. There are not many secrets in the city, and Morrison's big plunge on a particular share, notwithstanding its steady drop, had been freely commented upon.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Laverick?" the banker asked.

"I am not sure," answered Laverick. "To tell you the truth, I am in a somewhat singular position."

The banker nodded. He had not a doubt but that he understood exactly what that position was.

"You have perhaps heard," Laverick continued slowly, "that my late partner, Mr. Morrison—"

"Late partner?" the manager interrupted.

Laverick assented. "We had a few words last night," he explained, "and Mr. Morrison left the office with an understanding between us that he should

not return. You will receive a formal intimation of that during the course of the next day or so. We will revert to the matter presently, if you wish. My immediate business with you is to discuss the fact that I have to provide something like twenty thousand pounds today if I decide to take up the purchases of stock which Morrison has made."

"You understand the position, of course, Mr. Laverick if you fail to do so?" the manager remarked gravely.

"Naturally," Laverick answered. "I am quite aware of the fact that Morrison acted on behalf of the firm and that I am responsible for his transactions. He has plunged pretty deeply, though, a great deal more deeply than our capital warranted. I may add that I had not the slightest idea as to the extent of his dealings."

The bank manager adopted a sympathetic but serious attitude.

"Twenty thousand pounds," he declared, "is a great deal of money, Mr. Laverick."

"It is a great deal of money," Laverick admitted. "I am here to ask you to lend it to me."

The bank manager raised his eyebrows. "My dear Mr. Laverick!" he exclaimed reproachfully.

"Upon unimpeachable security," Laverick continued.

The bank manager was conscious that he had allowed a little start of surprise to escape him, and bit his lip with annoyance. It was entirely contrary to his tenets to display at any time during office hours any sort of emotion.

"Unimpeachable security," he repeated. "Or course, if you have that to offer, Mr. Laverick, although the sum is a large one, it is our business to see what we can do for you."

"My security is of the best," Laverick declared grimly. "I have bank-notes here, Mr. Fenwick, for twenty thousand pounds."

The bank manager was again guilty of an unprofessional action. He whistled softly under his breath. A very respectable client he had always considered Mr. Stephen Laverick, but he

had certainly never suspected him of being able to produce at a pinch such evidence of means. Laverick smoothed out the notes and laid them upon the table.

"Mr. Fenwick," he said, "I believe I am right in assuming that when one comes to one's bankers, one enters, as it were, into a confessional. I feel convinced that nothing which I say to you will be repeated outside this office, or will be allowed to dwell in your own mind except with reference to this particular transaction between you and me. I have the right, have I not, to take that for granted?"

"Most certainly," the banker agreed.

"From a strictly ethical point of view," Laverick went on, "this money is not mine. I hold it in trust for its owner, but I hold it without any conditions. I have power to make what use I wish of it, and I choose today to use it on my own behalf. Whether I am justified or not is scarcely a matter, I presume, which concerns this excellent banking establishment over which you preside so ably. I do not pay these banknotes in to my account and ask you to credit me with twenty thousand pounds. I ask you to allow me to deposit them here for seven days as security against an overdraft. You can then advance me enough money to meet my engagements of today."

The banker took up the notes and looked them through, one by one. They were very crisp, very new and absolutely genuine.

"This is somewhat of an extraordinary proceeding, Mr. Laverick," he said.

"I have no doubt that it must seem so to you," Laverick admitted. "At the same time, there is the money. You can run no risk. If I am exceeding my moral right in making use of these notes, it is I who will have to pay. Will you do as I ask?"

The banker hesitated. The transaction was a somewhat peculiar one, but on the face of it there could be no possible risk. At the same time, there was something about it which he could not understand.

"Your wish, Mr. Laverick," he re-

marked, looking at him thoughtfully, "seems to be to keep these notes out of circulation."

Laverick returned his gaze without flinching. "In a sense, that is so," he assented.

"On the whole," the banker declared, "I should prefer to credit them to your account in the usual way."

"I am sorry," Laverick answered, "but I have a sentimental feeling about it. I prefer to keep the notes intact. If you cannot follow out my suggestion, I must remove my account at once. This isn't a threat, Mr. Fenwick—you will understand that, I am sure. It is simply a matter of business, and owing to Morrison's speculations I have no time for arguments. I am quite satisfied to remain in your hands, but my feeling in the matter is exactly as I have stated, and I cannot change. If you are to retain my account, my engagements for today must be met precisely in the way I have pointed out."

The banker excused himself and left the room for a few moments. When he returned, he shrugged his shoulders with the air of one who is giving in to an unreasonable client.

"It shall be as you say, Mr. Laverick," he announced. "The notes are placed upon deposit. Your engagements today up to twenty thousand pounds shall be duly honored."

Laverick shook hands with him, talked for a moment or two about indifferent matters and strolled back toward his office. He had rather the sense of a man who moves in a dream, who is living, somehow, in a life which doesn't belong to him. He was doing the impossible. He knew very well that his name was in everyone's mouth. People were looking at him sympathetically, wondering how he could have been such a fool as to become the victim of an irresponsible speculator. No one ever imagined that he would be able to keep his engagements. And he had done it. The price might be a great one, but he was prepared to pay. At any moment the sensational news might be upon the placards, and the whole world might know that the man who

had been murdered in Crooked Friars last night had first been robbed of twenty thousand pounds. So far he had felt himself curiously free from anything in the shape of direct apprehensions. Already, however, the shadow was beginning to fall. Even as he entered his office, the sight of a stranger offering office files for sale made him start. He half expected to feel a hand upon his shoulder, a few words whispered in his ear. He set his teeth tight. This was his risk and he must take it.

For several hours he remained in his office, engaged in a scheme for the re-direction of its policy. With the absence of Morrison, too, there were other changes to be made, changes in the nature of the business they were prepared to handle, limits to be fixed. It was not until nearly luncheon time that the telephone, the simultaneous arrival of several clients, and the breathless entry of his own head clerk rushing in from the house, told him what was going on.

"Unions have taken their turn at last!" the clerk announced in an excited tone. "They sagged a little this morning, but since eleven they have been going steadily up. Just now there seems to be a boom. Listen!"

Laverick heard the roar of voices in the street, and nodded. He was prepared to be surprised at nothing.

"They were bound to go within a day or two," he remarked. "Morrison wasn't an absolute idiot."

The luncheon hour passed. The excitement in the city grew. By three o'clock, ten thousand pounds would have covered all of Laverick's engagements. Just before closing time, it was even doubtful whether he might not have borrowed every penny without security at all. He took it all quite calmly and as a matter of course. He left the office a little earlier than usual, and every man whom he met stopped to slap him on the back and chaff him. He escaped as soon as he could, bought the evening papers, found a taxicab, and as soon as he had started spread them open. It was a remarkable proof of the man's self-restraint that at no time

during the afternoon had he sent out for one of these early editions. He turned them over now with firm fingers. There was absolutely no fresh news. No one had come forward with any suggestions as to the identity of the murdered man. All day long the body had lain in the morgue, visited by a constant stream of the curious, but presumably unrecognized. Laverick could scarcely believe the words he read. The thing seemed ludicrously impossible. The twenty thousand pounds must have come from someone. Why did they keep silence? What was the mystery about it? Could it be that they were not in a position to disclose the fact? Curiously enough, this unnatural absence of news inspired him with something which was almost fear. He had taken his risks boldly enough. Now that fate was playing him this unexpectedly good turn, he was conscious of a growing nervousness. Who could he have been, this man? Whence could he have derived this great sum? One person at least must know that he had been robbed—the man who murdered him must know it. A cold shiver passed through Laverick's veins at the thought. Somewhere in London there must be a man thirsting for his blood, a man who had committed a murder in vain and been robbed of his spoil.

Laverick had no engagements for that evening, but instead of going to his club he drove straight to his rooms, meaning to change a little early for dinner and go to a theater. He found there, however, a small boy waiting for him with a note in his hand. It was addressed in pencil only, and his name was printed upon it.

Laverick tore it open with a haste which he only imperfectly concealed. There was something ominous to him in those printed characters. Its contents however, were short enough.

DEAR LAVERICK,

I must see you. Come the moment you get this. Come without fail, for your own sake and mine.

A. M.

Laverick looked at the boy. His fingers were trembling, but it was with relief. The note was from Morrison.

"There is no address here," he remarked.

"The gent said as I was to take you back with me," the boy answered.

"Is it far?" Laverick asked.

"Close to Red Lion Square," the boy declared. "Not more'n five minutes in one of them taxicabs. The gent said we was to take one. He is in a hurry to see you."

Laverick did not hesitate a moment. "Very well," he said; "we'll start at once."

He put on his hat again and waited while the commissionaire called them a taxicab.

"What address?" he asked.

"Number 7, Theobold Square," the boy said.

Laverick nodded and repeated the address to the driver.

"What the dickens can Morrison be doing in a part like that?" he thought, as they passed up Northumberland Avenue.

XIV

THE square was a small one, and in a particularly unsavory neighborhood. Laverick, who had once visited his partner's somewhat extensive suite of rooms in Jermyn Street, rang the bell doubtfully. The door was opened almost at once, not by a servant, but by a young lady who was obviously expecting him. Before he could open his lips to frame an inquiry, she had closed the door behind him. "Will you please come this way?" she said timidly.

Laverick found himself in a small sitting room, unexpectedly neat, and with the plainness of its furniture relieved by certain undeniable traces of some cultured presence. The girl, who had followed him, stood with her back to the door, a little out of breath. Laverick contemplated her in surprise. She was under the medium height, with small pale face and wonderful dark eyes. Her brown hair was parted in the middle and arranged low, so that at first, taking into account her obvious nervousness, he thought that she was a child. When she spoke, however, he knew that

for some reason she was afraid. Her voice was soft and low, but it was the voice of a woman.

"It is Mr. Laverick, is it not?" she asked, looking at him eagerly.

"My name is Stephen Laverick," he admitted. "I understood that I should find Mr. Arthur Morrison here."

"Yes," the girl answered, "he sent for you. The note was from him. He is here."

She made no movement to summon him. She still stood, in fact, with her back to the door. Laverick was distinctly puzzled. He felt himself unable to place this timid, childlike woman with her terrified face and beautiful eyes. He had never heard Morrison speak of having any relations. His presence in such a locality, indeed, was hard to understand unless he had met with an accident. Morrison was one of those young men who would have chosen Hell with a W rather than Heaven, E. C.

"I am afraid," Laverick said, "that for some reason or other you are afraid of me. I can assure you that I am quite harmless," he added, smiling. "Won't you sit down and tell me what is the matter? Is Mr. Morrison in any trouble?"

"Yes," she answered, "he is. As for me, I am terrified."

She came a little away from the door. Laverick was a man who inspired trust. His tone, too, was unusually kind. He had the protective instinct of a big man toward a small woman.

"Come and tell me all about it," he suggested. "I expected to hear that he had gone abroad."

"Mr. Laverick," she said, looking up at him tremulously, "I was hoping that you could have told me what it was—that had come to him."

"Well, that rather depends," Laverick answered. "We certainly had a terribly anxious time yesterday. Our business has been most unfortunate—"

"Yes, yes!" the girl interrupted. "Please go on. There have been business troubles, then?"

"Rather," Laverick continued. "Last night they reached such a pitch that I gave Morrison some money and it was

agreed that he should leave the firm and try his luck somewhere else. I quite understood that he was going abroad."

The girl seemed, for some reason, relieved. "There was something, then!" she said, half to herself. "There was something! Oh, I am glad of that! You were angry with him, perhaps, Mr. Laverick?"

Laverick stood with his back to the little fireplace and with his hands behind him—a commanding figure in the tiny room full of feminine trifles. He looked a great deal more at his ease than he really was.

"Perhaps I was inclined to be short-tempered," he admitted. "You see, to be frank with you, the department of our business that was going wrong was the one over which Morrison has had sole control. He had entered into certain speculations which I considered unjustifiable. Today, however, matters took an unexpected turn for the better."

Almost as he spoke his face clouded. Morrison, of course, would be triumphant. Perhaps he would even expect to be reinstated. For many reasons, this was a thing which Laverick did not desire.

"Now tell me," he continued, "what is the matter with Morrison, and why has he sent for me? And, if you will pardon my saying so, why is he here instead of in his own rooms?"

"I will explain," she began softly.

"You will please explain sitting down," he said firmly. "And don't look so terrified," he added, with a little laugh. "I can assure you that I am not going to eat you. You make me feel quite uncomfortable."

She smiled for the first time, and Laverick thought that he had never seen anything so wonderful as the change in her features. The strained rigidity passed away. An altogether softer light gleamed in her wonderful eyes. She was certainly by far the prettiest child he had ever seen. As yet he could not take her altogether seriously.

"Thank you," she said, sinking down upon the arm of an easy chair. "First of all, then, Arthur is here because he is my brother."

"Your brother!" Laverick repeated wonderingly.

Somehow or other, he had never associated Morrison with relations. Besides this meant that she must be of his race. There was nothing in her face to denote it except the darkness of her eyes, and that nameless charm of manner, a sort of ultra-sensitiveness, which belongs sometimes to the highest type of Jews. It was not a quality, Laverick thought, which he should have associated with Morrison's sister.

"My brother, in a way," she resumed. "Arthur's father was a widower and my mother was a widow when they were married. You are surprised?"

"There is no reason why I should be," he answered, curiously relieved at her last statement. "Your brother and I have been connected in business for some years. We have seen very little of one another outside."

"I dare say," she continued, still timidly, "that Arthur's friends would not be your friends, and that he wouldn't care for the same sort of things. You see, my mother is dead and also his father, and as we aren't really related at all, I cannot expect that he would come to see me very often. Last night, though, quite late—long after I had gone to bed—he rang the bell here. I was frightened, for just now I am all alone, and my servant only comes in the morning. So I looked out of the window and I saw him on the pavement, huddled up against the door. I hurried down and let him in. Mr. Laverick," she went on, with an appealing glance at him, "I have never seen anyone look like it. He was terrified to death. Something seemed to have happened which had taken away from him even the power of speech. He pushed past me into this room, threw himself into that chair," she added, pointing across the room, "and he sobbed and beat his hands upon his knees as though he were a woman in a fit of hysterics. His clothes were all untidy; he was as pale as death, and his eyes looked as though they were ready to start out of his head."

"You must indeed have been frightened," Laverick said softly.

"Frightened! I shall never forget it! I did not sleep all night. He would tell me nothing—he has scarcely spoken a sensible word. Early this morning I persuaded him to go upstairs, and made him lie down. He has taken two draughts which I bought from the chemist, but he has not slept. Every now and then he tries to get up, but in a minute or two he throws himself down on the bed again and hides his face. If anyone rings at the bell he shrieks. If he hears a footfall in the street, even, he calls out for me. Mr. Laverick, I have never been so frightened in my life. I didn't know whom to send for or what to do. When he wrote that note to you I was so relieved. You can't imagine how glad I am to think you have come!"

Laverick's eyes were full of sympathy. One could see that the scene of last night had risen up again before her eyes. She was shrinking back, and the terror was upon her once more. He moved over to her side, and with an impulse which, when he thought of it afterward, amazed him, laid his hand gently upon her shoulder.

"Don't worry yourself thinking about it," he said. "I will talk to your brother. We did have words, I'll admit, last night, but there wasn't the slightest reason why it should have upset him in this way. Things in the city were shocking yesterday, but they have improved a great deal today. Let me go upstairs, and I'll try and pump some courage into him."

"You are so kind," she murmured, suddenly dropping her hands from before her face and looking up at him with shining eyes. "Will you come, then?"

She rose and he followed her out of the room, up the stairs, and into a tiny bedroom. Laverick had no time to look around, but it seemed to him, notwithstanding the cheap white furniture and very ordinary appointments, that the same note of dainty femininity pervaded this little apartment as the one below.

"It is my room," she said shyly. "There is no other properly furnished and I thought that he might sleep upon the bed."

"Perhaps he is asleep now," Laverick whispered.

Even as he spoke, the dark figure stretched upon the sheets sprang into a sitting posture. Laverick was conscious of a distinct shock. It was Morrison, still wearing the clothes in which he had left the office, his collar crushed out of all shape, his tie vanished. His black hair, usually so shiny and perfectly arranged, was all disordered. Out of his staring eyes flashed an expression which one sees seldom in life, an expression of real and mortal terror.

"Who is it?" he cried out, and even his voice was unrecognizable. "Who is that? What do you want?"

"It is I—Laverick," Laverick answered. "What on earth is the matter with you, man?"

Morrison drew a quick breath. Some part of the terror seemed to leave his face, but he was still an alarming-looking object. Laverick quietly opened the door and laid his hand upon the girl's shoulder.

"Will you leave us alone?" he asked. "I will come and talk to you afterward, if I may."

She nodded understandingly and passed out. Laverick closed the door and came up to the bedside.

"What in the name of thunder has come over you, Morrison?" he said. "Are you ill, or what is it?"

Morrison opened his lips—opened them twice—without any sort of sound issuing.

"This is absurd!" Laverick exclaimed protestingly. "I have been feeling worried myself, but there's nothing so terrifying in losing one's money, after all. As a matter of fact, things are altogether better in the city today. You made a big mistake in taking us out of our depth, but we are going to pull through, after all. Unions have been going up all day."

Laverick's presence, and the sound of his even, matter-of-fact tone, seemed to act like a tonic upon his late partner. He made no reference, however, to Laverick's words.

"You got my note?" he asked hoarsely.

"Naturally, I got it," Laverick answered impatiently, "and I came at once. Try and pull yourself together. Sit up and tell me what you are doing here, frightening your sister out of her wits."

Morrison groaned. "I came here," he muttered, "because I dared not go to my own rooms. I was afraid!"

Laverick struggled with the contempt he felt. "Man alive!" he exclaimed. "What was there to be afraid of?"

"You don't know!" Morrison faltered. "You don't know!"

Then, for the first time, it occurred to Laverick that perhaps the financial crisis in their affairs was not the only thing which had reduced his late partner to this hopeless state. He looked at him narrowly.

"Where did you go last night," he asked, "when you left me?"

"Nowhere," Morrison gasped. "I came here."

Laverick made a space for himself at the end of the bed and sat down.

"Look here," he said; "it's no use sending for me unless you mean to tell me everything. Have you been getting yourself into any trouble apart from our affairs, or is there anything in connection with them which I don't know?"

Again Morrison opened his lips, and again, for some reason or other, he remained speechless. Then a certain fear came also upon Laverick. There was something in Morrison's state which was in itself terrifying.

"You had better tell me all about it," Laverick said, "whatever it is. I will help you if I can."

Morrison shook his head. There was a glass of water by his side. He thrust his finger into it and passed it across his lips. They were dry, almost cracking.

"Look here," he said, "I've got a breakdown—that's what's the matter with me. My nerves were never good. I'm afraid of going mad. The anxiety of the last few weeks has been too much for me. I want to get out of the country quickly, and I don't know how to manage it. I can't think. Directly I try to think my head goes round."

"There is nothing in the world to pre-

vent your going away," Laverick answered. "It is the simplest matter possible. Even if we had gone under today, no one could have stopped your going wherever you chose to go. Ruin, even if it had been ruin—and I told you just now that business was better—is not a crime. Pull yourself together, for heaven's sake, man! You should be ashamed to come here and frighten that poor little girl downstairs almost to death."

Morrison gripped his partner's arm. "You must do as I ask," he declared. "It doesn't matter about prices being better. I want to get away. You must help me."

Laverick looked at him steadily. Morrison was an ordinary young man of his type, something of a swaggerer, probably at heart a coward. But this was no ordinary fear—not even the ordinary fear of a coward. Laverick's face became graver. There was something else, then!

"I will get you out of the country if I can," said he. "There is no difficulty about it at all unless you are concealing something from me. You can catch a fast steamer tomorrow, either for South Africa or New York, but before I make any definite plans, hadn't you better tell me exactly what happened last night?"

Once more Morrison's lips parted without the ability to frame words. Then a feeble moan escaped him. He threw up his hands and his head fell back. The ghastliness of his face spread almost to his lips, and he sank back among the pillows. Laverick strode across the room to the door, and called to the girl.

"There is nothing to be alarmed at," he said, "but your brother has fainted. Bring me some sal volatile, if you have it, and I think that you had better run out and get a doctor. I will stay with him. I know exactly what to do."

She pointed to the dressing table, where a little bottle was standing, and ran downstairs without a word. Laverick mixed some of the spirit, and moved over to the side of the fainting man.

XV

THE doctor, a grave, incurious person, arrived within a few minutes, to find Morrison already conscious but absolutely exhausted. He felt his patient's pulse, prescribed a draught, and followed Laverick down into the sitting room.

"An ordinary case of nervous exhaustion," he pronounced. "The patient appears to have had a very severe shock lately. He will be all right with proper diet and treatment and a complete rest. I will call again tomorrow."

He accepted the fee which Laverick slipped into his hand, and took his departure. Once more Laverick was alone with the girl.

"There is nothing to be alarmed at, you see," he remarked.

"It is not his health which frightens me. I am sure—I am quite sure that he has something upon his mind. Did he tell you nothing?"

"Nothing at all," Laverick answered, with an inward sense of thankfulness. "To tell you the truth, though, I am afraid you are right and that he did get into some sort of trouble last night. He was just about to tell me something when he fainted."

Upstairs they could hear him moaning. The girl listened with pitiful face.

"What am I to do?" she asked. "I cannot leave him like this, and if I am not at the theater in twenty minutes, I shall be fined."

"The theater?" Laverick repeated.

"I am on the stage," she said—"only a chorus girl at the Universal, worse luck. Still, they don't allow us to stay away, and I can't afford to lose my place."

"Do you mean to say that you have been keeping yourself here, then?" Laverick asked bluntly.

"Of course," she answered. "I do not like to be a burden on anyone, and after all, you see, Arthur and I are really not related. He has always told me, too, that times have been so bad lately."

Laverick was on the point of telling her that, bad though they had been, Arthur Morrison had never drawn less

than fifteen hundred a year, but he checked himself. It was not his business to interfere.

"I think," he said, "that your brother ought to have provided for you. He could have done so with very little effort."

"But what am I to do now?" she asked him. "If I am absent, I shall lose my place."

Laverick thought for a moment. "If you went round there and told them," he suggested, "would that make any difference? I could stay until you come back."

"Do you mind?" she asked eagerly. "It would be so kind of you."

"Not at all," he answered. "Perhaps you would be good enough to bring a taxicab back, and I could take it on to my rooms. Take one from here, if you can find it. There are always some at the corner."

He watched her go up on tiptoe for fear of disturbing her brother. Her feet seemed almost unearthly in the lightness of their pressure. Not a board creaked. She seemed to float down to him in a most becoming little hat but a shockingly shabby jacket, of whose deficiencies she seemed wholly unaware. Her lips were parted once more in a smile.

"He is fast asleep and breathing quite regularly," she announced. "It is nice of you to stay."

He looked at her almost jealously. "Do you know," he said, "you ought not to go about alone!"

She laughed softly but heartily. "Have you any idea how old I am?"

"I took you for fourteen when I came inside," he answered. "Afterward I thought you might be sixteen. Later on it seemed to me possible that you were eighteen. I am absolutely certain that you are not more than nineteen."

"That shows how little you know about it. I am twenty, and I am quite used to going about alone. Will you sit upstairs or here? I am so sorry that I have nothing to offer you."

"Thanks; I need nothing. I think I will sit upstairs in case he wakes."

She nodded and stole out, closing the

door behind her noiselessly. Laverick watched her from the window until she was out of sight, moving without any appearance of haste yet with an incredible swiftness. When she had turned the corner, he went slowly upstairs and into the room where Morrison still lay asleep. He drew a chair to the bedside and leaning forward opened out the evening paper. The events of the last hour or so had completely blotted out from his mind, for the time being, his own expedition into the world of tragic happenings. He glanced at the sleeping man, then opened his paper. There was very little fresh news except that this time the fact was mentioned that upon the body of the murdered man was discovered a sum larger than was at first supposed. It seemed doubtful, therefore, whether robbery, after all, was the motive of the crime, especially as it took place in a neighborhood which was by no means infested with criminals. There was a suggestion of political motive, a reference to the "Black Hand," concerning whose doings the papers had been full since the murder of a well known detective a few weeks ago. But apart from this there was nothing fresh.

Laverick folded up the paper and leaned back in his chair. The strain of the last twenty-four hours was beginning to tell even upon his robust constitution. The atmosphere of the room, too, was close. He leaned back in his chair and was suddenly weary. Perhaps he dozed. At any rate, the whisper which called him back to realization of where he was came to him so unexpectedly that he sat up with a sudden start.

Morrison's eyes were open; he had raised himself on his elbow; his lips were parted. His manner was quieter, but there were deep black lines under his eyes, in which there still shone something of that haunting fear.

"Laverick!" he repeated hoarsely.

Laverick, fully awakened now, leaned toward him.

"Hello!" he said. "Are you feeling more like yourself?"

Morrison nodded. "Yes," he ad-

mitted. "I am feeling—better. How did you come here? I can't remember anything."

"You sent for me," Laverick answered. "I arrived to find you pretty well in a state of collapse. Your sister has gone round to the theater to ask them to excuse her this evening."

"I remember now that I sent for you," Morrison continued. "Tell me, has anyone been around at the office asking for me?"

"No one in particular," Laverick answered—"no one at all that I can think of. There were one or two inquiries through the telephone, but they were all ordinary business matters."

The man on the bed drew a little breath which sounded like a sigh of relief.

"I have made a fool of myself, Laverick," he said hoarsely.

"You are making a worse one of yourself by lying here and giving way," Laverick declared, "besides frightening your sister half to death."

Morrison passed his hand across his forehead.

"We talked—some time ago," he went on, "about my getting away. You promised that you would help me. You said that I could get off to Africa or America tomorrow."

"Not the slightest difficulty about that," Laverick answered. "There are half a dozen steamers sailing, at least. At the same time, I suppose I ought to remind you that the firm is going to pull through. Mind—don't take this unkindly but the truth is best—I will not have you back again. There may have to be a more definite readjustment of our affairs now, but the old business is finished with."

"I don't want to come back," Morrison murmured. "I have had enough of the city for the rest of my life. I'd rather get away somewhere and make a fresh start. You'll help me, Laverick, won't you?"

"Yes, I will help you," Laverick promised.

"You were always a good sort," Morrison continued, "much too good for me. It was a rotten partnership

for you. We could never have pulled together."

"Let that go," Laverick interrupted. "If you really mean getting away, that simplifies matters, of course. Have you made any plans at all? Where do you want to go?"

"To New York," answered Morrison. "New York would suit me best. There is money to be made there if one has something to make a start with."

"There will be some more money to come to you," Laverick answered, "probably a great deal more. I shall place our affairs in the hands of an accountant, and shall have an estimate drawn up to yesterday. You shall have every penny that is due you. You have quite enough, however, to get there with. I will see to your ticket tonight, if possible. When you've arrived you can cable me your address, or you can decide where you will stay before you leave, and I will send you a further remittance."

"You're a good sort, Laverick," Morrison mumbled.

"You'd better give me the key of your rooms," Laverick continued, "and I will go back and put together some of your things. I suppose you will not want much to go away with. The rest can be sent on afterward. And what about your letters?"

Morrison, with a sudden movement, threw himself almost out of the bed. He clutched at Laverick's shoulder frantically.

"Don't go near my rooms, Laverick!" he begged. "Promise me that you won't! I don't want any letters! I don't want any of my things!"

Laverick was dumfounded. "You mean you want to go away without—"

"I mean just what I have said," Morrison continued hysterically. "If you go there they will watch you, they will follow you, they will find out where I am. I should be there now but for that."

Laverick was silent for a moment. The matter was becoming serious.

"Very well," he said; "I will do as you say. I will not go near your rooms. I will get you a few things somewhere to start with."

Morrison sank back upon his pillow. "Thank you, Laverick," he said; "thank you. I wish—I wish—"

His voice seemed to die away. Laverick glanced toward him, wondering at the unfinished sentence. Once again the man's face seemed to be convulsed with horror. He flung himself face downward upon the bed and tore at the sheets with both his hands.

"Don't be a fool," Laverick said sternly. "If you've anything on your mind apart from business, tell me about it and I'll do what I can to help you."

Morrison made no reply. He was sobbing now like a child. Laverick rose to his feet and went to the window. What was to be done with such a creature? When he got back, Morrison had raised himself once more into a sitting posture. His appearance was absolutely spectral.

"Laverick," he said feebly, "there is something else, but I cannot tell you—I cannot tell anyone."

"Just as you please, of course," Laverick answered. "I am simply anxious to help you."

"You can do that as it is!" Morrison exclaimed feverishly. "You must promise me something—promise that if anyone asks for me tomorrow before I get away you will not tell them where I am. Say you suppose that I am at my rooms, or that I have gone into the country for a few days. Say that you are expecting me back. Don't let anyone know that I have gone abroad, until I am safely away. And then don't tell a soul where I have gone."

"Have you been up to any tricks with your friends?" Laverick asked sternly.

"I haven't—I swear that I haven't," Morrison declared. "It's something quite outside business—quite outside business altogether."

"Very well," answered Laverick; "I will promise what you have asked. Listen—here is your sister back again," he added, as he heard the taxicab stop outside. "Pull yourself together and don't frighten her so much. I am going down to meet her. I shall tell her that

you are better. Try and buck up when she comes in to see you."

"I'll do my best," Morrison said humbly. "If you knew—if you only knew!"

He began to sob again. Laverick left the room and, descending the stairs, met the girl in the hall. Her white face questioned him before her lips had time to frame the speech.

"Your brother is very much better," Laverick said. "I am sure that you need not be anxious about him."

"I am so glad," she murmured. "They let me off but I had to pay a fine. I had no idea before that I was so important. Shall I go to him now?"

"One moment," Laverick answered, holding open the door of the sitting room. "Miss Morrison—" he went on.

"Miss Leneveu is my name," she interrupted.

"I beg your pardon. Your brother evidently has something on his mind apart from business. I am afraid that he has been getting into some sort of trouble. I don't think there is any object in bothering him about it, but the great thing is to get him away."

"You will help?" she begged.

"I will help, certainly," Laverick answered. "I have promised to. You must see that he is ready to leave here at seven o'clock tomorrow morning. He wants to go to New York, and the special to catch the German boat will leave Waterloo somewhere about eight to eight thirty."

"But his clothes!" she cried. "How can he be ready by then?"

"Your brother does not wish me nor anyone to go near his rooms or to send him any of his belongings," Laverick continued quietly.

"But how strange!" the girl exclaimed. "Do you mean to say, then, that he is going without anything?"

"I am afraid," Laverick said kindly, "that we must take it for granted that your brother has got mixed up in some undesirable business or other. He is nervously anxious to keep his whereabouts an entire secret. He has been asking me whether anyone has been to the office to inquire for him. Under the

circumstances, I think the best thing we can do is to humor him. I shall buy him before tomorrow morning a cheap dressing case and a ready-made suit of clothes and a few things for the voyage. Then I shall send a cab for you both at seven o'clock and meet you at the station."

"You are very kind," she murmured. "What should I have done without you? Oh, I cannot think!"

The protective instinct in the man was suddenly strong. Naturally unaffectionate, he was conscious of an almost overmastering desire to take her hands in his, even to lift her up and kiss away the tears which shone in her deep, child-like eyes. He reminded himself that she was a stranger, that her appearance of youth was a delusion, that she could only construe such an action as a liberty, an impertinence, offered under circumstances for which there could be no possible excuse.

He moved away toward the door. "Naturally," he said, "I am glad to be of use to your brother. You see," he explained, a little awkwardly, "after all, we have been partners in business." He caught a look upon her face and smiled. "Naturally, too," he continued, "it has been a great pleasure for me to do anything to relieve your anxiety."

She gave him her hands then of her own accord. The gratitude which shone out of her swimming eyes seemed mingled with something which was almost invitation. Laverick was suddenly swept off his feet. Something had come into his life—something absurd, uncounted upon, incomprehensible. The atmosphere of the room seemed electrified. In a moment he had done what only a second or two before he had told himself would be the action of a cad. He had taken her, unresisting, up into his arms, kissed her eyes and lips. Afterward he was never able to remember those few moments clearly, only it seemed to him that she had accepted his caress almost without hesitation, with the effortless serenity of a child receiving a natural consolation in a time of trouble. But Laverick was conscious

of other feelings as he leaned hard back in the corner of his taxicab and was driven swiftly away.

XVI

LAVERICK, notwithstanding that the hour was becoming late, found an outfitter's shop in the Strand still open, and made such purchases as he could on Morrison's behalf. Then, with the bag ready packed, he returned to his rooms. Time had passed quickly during the last three hours. It was nearly nine o'clock when he stepped out of the lift and opened the door of his small suite of rooms with the latchkey which hung from his chain. He began to change his clothes mechanically, and he had nearly finished when the telephone bell upon his table rang.

"Who's that?" he asked, taking up the receiver.

"Hall porter, sir," was the answer. "Person here wishes to see you particularly."

"A person!" Laverick repeated. "Man or woman?"

"Man, sir."

"Better send him up," Laverick ordered.

"He's a seedy-looking lot, sir," the porter explained. "I told him that I scarcely thought you'd see him."

"Never mind," Laverick answered. "I can soon get rid of the fellow if necessary."

He went back to his room and finished fastening his tie. His own affairs had sunk a little into the background lately, but the announcement of this unusual visitor brought them back into his mind with a rush. Notwithstanding his iron nerves, his fingers shook as he drew on his dinner jacket and walked out to the passageway to answer the bell which rang a few seconds later. A man stood outside, dressed in shabby black clothes, whose face somehow was familiar to him, although he could not, for the moment, place it.

"Do you want to see me?" Laverick asked.

"If you please, Mr. Laverick," the man replied, "if you could spare me just a moment."

"You had better come inside, then," Laverick said, closing the door and leading the way into the sitting room. At any rate, there was nothing threatening about the appearance of this visitor—nor anything official.

"I have taken the liberty of coming, sir," the man announced, "to ask you if you can tell me where I can find Mr. Arthur Morrison."

Laverick's face showed no sign of his relief. What he felt he succeeded in keeping to himself.

"You mean Morrison—my partner, I suppose?" he answered.

"If you please, sir," the man admitted. "I wanted a word or two with him most particular. I found out his address from the caretaker of your office, but he don't seem to have been home to his rooms at all last night, and they know nothing about him there."

"Your face seems familiar to me," Laverick remarked. "Where do you come from?"

The man hesitated. "I am the waiter, sir, at the Black Post—little bar and restaurant, you know," he added, "just behind your offices, sir, at the end of Crooked Friars Alley. You've been in once or twice, Mr. Laverick, I think. Mr. Morrison's a regular customer. He comes in for a drink most mornings."

Laverick nodded. "I knew I'd seen your face somewhere," he said. "What do you want with Mr. Morrison?"

The man was silent. He twirled his hat and looked embarrassed.

"It's a matter I shouldn't like to mention to anyone except Mr. Morrison himself, sir," he declared finally. "If you could put me in the way of seeing him I'd be glad. I may say that it would be to his advantage, too."

(To be continued)



THE WORST DRAMATIC CRITIC IN AMERICA

By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

WERE I a theatrical manager, I should bar from my playhouse the fawning dramatic "critic" who declared my failures to be successes with the same celerity with which I would exclude the prejudiced critic who persistently pronounced my apparently meritorious productions to be utterly lacking in value. Biased criticism is not the less despicable because it praises.

The attribute "success," bequeathed by the advertising page of a newspaper personified by its pseudo dramatic reviewer, is the meanest, cheapest, nastiest stain on a calling that, above all others, must be honest to justify its being. Even less damning a blot is the café species of criticism that elects to substitute Pilsener wit for intelligent dramatic analysis, and that seeks to exploit "cleverness" at the expense of dignity and truth. Not that dramatic criticism must be dull to be truthful—despite contrary academic impression. The fact that some of our fairest critics are extremely boresome in print makes poor meat for argumentation. These gentlemen have sharp minds but dull pens. One may sometimes smile and yet be serious—if one has clean, white teeth.

Were I a theatrical manager, I should, nevertheless, ask myself one question before I shut my dramatic door against criticism. "Where shall I draw the line?" I should inquire of myself. And then I would answer: "I will exclude any writer who is not as honest as I, in my own heart, am." And I would thus settle effectively and satisfactorily a most difficult problem. The butcher

who palms off rump steak on his customers for porterhouse knows it is not porterhouse; the tailor who sells pick-aninny pickings for all-wool knows it is not all-wool; the restaurateur who serves colored shad roe for Russian caviar knows it is not Russian caviar; the theatrical manager who presents piffle in dramatic disguise knows it is not anything else. But, like his fellow merchants and tradesmen, he must be sufficiently liberal to admit it to himself. Some managers do; some do not. In the main, however, most theatrical managers, I believe, are fair critics—at least when they repair to their rooms at night, shut out the world and hold communion with themselves. They know deserving drama just as well as do the professional critics. And the honest critic has no keener admirer and appreciator than these selfsame managers. It lies in the hands of the latter to keep dramatic criticism in the United States clean, valuable, useful, inspiring and above venality. And this may be accomplished by barring from the theaters not only the misguided individuals whose written judgments of the drama consist largely of innuendoes concerning the personal chastity of the leading ladies and irrelevant monographs on the business methods obtaining in the box office, but also such hypocritical lackeys as vend dramatic encomiums and panegyrics at advertising rates or in return for boxes of perfectos or—what is infinitely worse—simply because they do not know any better. Than one of these prodigal "success" peddlers, there is no worse dramatic critic in America—

unless it be an actor. For among all human beings, in or out of their normal senses, there are none whose views of the drama and of its interpreters are so distorted, so utterly astigmatismic, so incessantly prejudiced and constantly artificial as the views of these very mummurs. But that, O Caliph, is yet another story!

Mr. Henry W. Savage, the manager who has given us the completely praiseworthy "Merry Widow," "Madame X," and grand opera in English, and who is a producer possessed of an admirable knowledge of his craft, should bar from his future productions the metropolitan reviewer who declared to the thousands of readers of his journal that "MISS PATSY" was a "success." Mr. Savage should realize that the "critic" in point is a dangerous man. He is precisely the sort of individual who, if the advertisements were cut down, might impose on his unsuspecting and cheated readers so far as to expostulate that "The Merry Widow" was tuneless, vapid, tedious and trashy. No critic who gets his salary from a source other than advertising returns can state fairly that "MISS PATSY" was anything else than Mr. Savage himself must appreciate.

WE have mentioned "Madame X," the weepy drama of mother love that has raised the price of handkerchiefs in New York. We now mention "MOTHER," the latest drama of similar theme that is destined to raise that price still higher. For here is a play that is going to make the entire United States feel a lump in its throat before its course is run. There is one scene alone in this exhibit, between the mother and her disgraced son, in which the gentle, loving woman soothes him, pleads with him and finally hugs him back hard in her trembling arms, that is more convincing than ten X-otic trial scenes. Viewed critically, "MOTHER" is a crudely wrought piece of dramatic fabric; but viewed through the heart, one forgets this. A number of critics did not take kindly to the presentation, whereupon Mr. William A. Brady, the producer,

plastered the town with placards reading: "If a man told me he did not like 'Mother,' I would not trust him." By the same token, it is to be presumed that if a man were to tell Mr. Brady he did not think "The Dollar Mark" was the greatest play in the world, Mr. Brady would have him arrested. I regard this same Mr. Brady as the peer of any producer in America; he has my whole admiration for his fine fighting faith in American dramatists; he is a credit to the theater of the nation; but his publicity methods would not be countenanced by even an excitable manager of a high school football team.

To Charles Frohman goes the honor of having disclosed on the stage of his Empire Theater the best cast play seen in New York in many a day. Rarely is a presentation so subtly, gracefully and finishedly accomplished as is the case with "SMITH," in which John Drew is this season making his appearance.

"SMITH" is by Somerset Maugham, and in this play the playwright at last reveals positive indications that his ability is not limited to the mere tedious exploitation of strung-together tea room titter and ipecacian epigram. It unfolds the story of Thomas Freeman, who after he has cultivated chorus girls, clubs and cocktails until he is tired, goes to Rhodesia to cultivate the soil, later on returning to London in search of a wife and taking up his temporary abode in his sister's home. His sister, vain, selfish and shallow, is surrounded by a set of teeing, bridging, dawdling female loafers, who where they have babies neglect them, and who where they have no babies also neglect them. In all the lot there is not a single unmarried woman who meets Freeman's demands—"a wife to look out for my home, to love me and to bring up my children." And he is rapidly disgusted with the lot of them.

In the circle, however, though not a part of it, there moves just one human being in petticoats who attracts Freeman—Smith, the serving maid. And gradually, as the sham and mockery and hypocrisy of the other women's

lives become more deeply impressed upon him, he turns to this one real woman, to this true, conscientious, decent thinking, decent living servant for the woman to go back with him.

Highly improbable, you say? Not at all! One of the most happily married men I know is an old university comrade who, in looking around for a wife, chose a dear little blond chambermaid in a hotel in Oswego, New York. A young aristocrat he was, too, of splendid Rhode Island stock, of exquisite breeding and manners and of ample worldly means. The girl didn't know much, but she was sincere, virtuous, well-bathed and a home body. And that is what my friend, who had danced cotillions with the best of them, was looking for. Of course his family protested, but he married the chambermaid, anyway, and I know no man today who has a more comfortable fireside, a more respectful and dutiful wife and a couple of more entirely captivating tots.

ANOTHER well-deserved success has been achieved by "THE COUNTRY BOY," by Edgar Selwyn and produced by Henry B. Harris. There is a scene in the second act showing the dining room of a cheap New York boarding house, with the boarders' knives and forks going into action, that discloses a masterpiece of character comedy. You behold the dingy eating room with its long, prune-y, hashy table waited on by a perspiring, loose-slippered negress who juggles the cheap china dishes with greasy fingers and Louisiana grunts. At the head there sits the landlady, fat, thick-shanked and frowning. Seated to her left and right is a motley assortment of typical boarding-house wretches embracing a down-and-out reporter who swears at the food and everything else; a brassy theater-ticket speculator who calls every woman he speaks to either "dearie" or "sweetie"; a grumpy traveling salesman and his petulant, imitation-pearled wife; a nervously ill-tempered woman who is cultivating her voice; a bald, jaundiced star boarder who smirks at the landlady; and a chorus girl who, while she believes that

virtue may be its own reward, doesn't care to be rewarded that way.

You behold them all—gobbling, gabbling, grumbling, galling, gorging, gibbering, glaring, gnawing, gnarling; you behold them through your gourmandic grillroom eyes, and you laugh at them out of cruel, well-stuffed stomachs, not realizing probably that beneath the comedy of the Gorkyan picture presented to your view there is suggested an equally vivid, antithetically pitiful picture of sorry, fate-singed souls who are condemned by poverty to that darkest hell on this glorious sunlit earth—the cheap boarding house. Laughter, however, dispels thoughts sociological, and "THE COUNTRY BOY" is full of laughter.

DESPITE the fact that "MADAME SHERRY" was enthusiastically received in Chicago, it was just as enthusiastically received in New York. It is one of the most tuneful entertainments in several seasons and merits the enormous patronage that is being accorded it.

"OUR MISS GIBBS," the London Gaiety musical comedy, is a sumptuously accoutered, pleasantly tuneful presentation that has succeeded in demonstrating beyond peradventure of a doubt that true ability will always triumph in the end, even though big type, press-agent stories, pink pajamas, an acquaintance with lords and earls and other alleged histrionic assets are put up against it. The ability in "OUR MISS GIBBS" is a little girl from Brooklyn, named Gertrude Vanderbilt; the big type, press agent stories, pink pajamas and chumship with lords and earls is Pauline Chase, formerly of this plebeian country, but in later years of that dead old Lunnun. And the way in which the simple, unaffected and actually talented little Miss Gertrude makes the exaggeratedly trumpeted and found-wanting Lady Pauline appear the amateur is maliciously gratifying to us unrefined Americans upon whom theatrical England spits contemptuously. With Miss Vanderbilt in the leading role, "OUR MISS GIBBS," with the emphasis on the

possessive pronoun, might run on Broadway until next June.

THERE were so many bright ideas in "THE UPSTART" that it was to be presumed a typical New York first-night audience would not care for the play. It did not, and, as a result of its either careless, ignorant or eczematous vilification, the play was practically stillborn. The second-night audience, composed of fewer wine agents, actors out of jobs, café operators and gaudy females than were present the evening before, seemed to enjoy the performance vastly. Unlike most of the typical first nighters, they probably understood it. "THE UPSTART" was from the pen of a song-and-dance man named Barry, and proved that vaudeville is not entirely made up, as we supposed, of trick dogs, monologists, sketch artists and other animals. Probably some day in the future, when typical first nighters learn to use their heads for purposes other than top hats and jeweled aigrettes, a play like Barry's will stand a chance.

ONCE upon a time there was a nice little play called "WELCOME TO OUR CITY," whose papa's name was George V. Hobart and whose godparents were Mr. and Mrs. Klaw and Erlanger. It was born in Hartford, Connecticut, one night in September, and all the people there came in to see it and to fondle it, and when they went away they said it was just the finest little play they had ever seen. And the next morning they put a long piece in the Hartford paper congratulating the new little visitor and wishing it long life and good luck. Well, after a short while along came a bad man named Joseph Brooks, who prevailed upon the innocent little play's father and godparents to allow him to take it back with him to New York, where, he promised, it would grow up to weigh 200 nights and earn money to help support its family. "The city," he said, "is just the place for your play. Don't make it stay in Hartford." And so the guileless little play was lured to New York, that den of safe crackers, confidence men, thieves, crooks, rob-

bers and dramatic critics. All unsuspecting, it was induced the very first night to go into the Bijou Theater, where it was introduced to the wicked reviewers and their base companions. And when the innocent little play partly regained its senses the next morning, it realized that it had been given an overdose of knockout drops. The moral of this fable is that it is a much longer distance from Hartford to New York than one might be led to believe from the railroad signs.

WHENEVER an old play is revived, a goodly portion of the theatergoing public loves to take a hand in the rare sport of explaining just how much inferior the present cast is to that which enacted the play in the "good old days." No sooner, accordingly, had William A. Brady announced a revival of Sardou's famous "DIPLOMACY" for the Maxine Elliott Theater, than all the antique fluffs and antiphonal bluffs began lamenting the passing of the old Union Square Theater, the wonderful old days at Wallack's, the old times at Daly's when you were able to see acting that *was* acting, and the rest of the usual insincere flubdub. Pray let us have done with this tedious histrionic grave-digging, this gleeful ghoulish tradition worship, this hypocritic veneration! The Brady revival of "DIPLOMACY," while not without its flaws, revealed an able presentation of the melodrama by a thoroughly efficient band of players.

DECORATING CLEMENTINE—(Lyceum)

A deliciously droll Gallic comedy with a satire on French women's ambition to join the Legion of Honor.

CON AND Co.—(Nazimova)

The badger game done into laughable farce.

HE CAME FROM MILWAUKEE—(Casino)

Sam Bernard and the most gorgeously costumed chorus on Broadway.

ANTI-MATRIMONY—(Garrick)

High class Ibsen burlesque by Percy Mackaye. You *may* understand it.

A GUIDE TO INTELLIGENT EATING

By H. L. MENCKEN

ORDERING eggs *à la* Nordenskjold, what may one expect to find in the plate when the velvet-footed waiter totes it in? What is the exact composition of sauce *financière*, of cocky-leeky soup, of chicken *portugaise*, of brook trout *argenteuil*, of a *bomb west-phalienne*? No doubt every true lover of fine victuals is constantly pestered by such problems. The bill of fare is a perpetual mystery. It is useless to seek to master it by sitting up nights with a French dictionary, for the nouns and adjectives upon it have esoteric and unearthly meanings, entirely unconnected with the meanings attached to them in ordinary French prose. One learns, perhaps, from Cassell, that *chiffon* means a rag, a scrap, a trinket, a frippery; but that knowledge gives one no clue to the fact that eggs *chiffonade* are eggs heaved into the frying pan, or pot, or broiler, or oven, or whatever it is they use to cook eggs, in company with a handful of chopped herbs, including sorrel. Sorrel seems to be the essential ingredient, but sorrel, in French, is *oseille*. And so the inquirer is baffled.

It is to relieve the world of this burden that M. Joseph Gancel, the eminent chef of the Hotel Belleclaire, has composed and published his "READY REFERENCE OF MENU TERMS" (Gancel, \$1.00), an exhaustive and excellent encyclopedia of the whole subject, and the fruit, as M. Gancel says with all due modesty, of thirty-five years of hard service in the most artistic kitchens of Europe and America and of intimate association with the most learned chefs of the age. M. Gancel dedicates his work to twenty-

nine of these artists, mentioning them by name in alphabetical order—from M. Anjard of the Waldorf-Astoria to M. Vautrin of the Pavillon d'Armenonville in Paris, and including that serene highness among cooks, M. Letors, chief of the culinary studios of M. le Baron de Rothschild of Vienna. It is a book of overwhelming merits, a book fairly bulging with information. It gives the formulæ of 150 separate and distinct sauces, of 400 omelettes, of no less than 600 soups! What is to be said of such a one-volume library, of such a bottomless pit of learning? The reviewer stands flabbergasted, paralyzed, silent.

But let us peep within. At once we penetrate the secret of cocky-leeky soup. It is a strong aqueous solution of the juices of chicken and veal, brought to a boil and garnished with cubes of chicken meat, leeks and celery—a savory and tasty mess, you may bet your bottom dollar. I should like to tackle a hog's-head of cocky-leeky soup on a brisk and windy day—a day of the tingling, appetizing sort. It would also delight me to encounter, on any old day, a platter covered by an omelette *havanaise*, with its dice of chicken livers boiled in milk, its fragments of sweet pepper and its rich, red tomato sauce. Yet again, who could resist a ration of lamb *impératrice*, with its stuffing of pulverized chicken and forcemeat, its sprinkling of truffles, its foliage of celery and its sauce *suprême*—or a plate of veal Metternich, with its decorations of red cabbage and chestnuts, and its *soubise* sauce, with paprika and rice? M. Gancel is not only accurate, but also

eloquent. His terse, epigrammatic style touches the heart.

Did I say "accurate"? Alas, even the most accurate man sometimes goes astray! Here is M. Gancel, a veritable Voltaire of cookery, telling us that crab *à la créole* is merely a dish of crab meat drenched in creole sauce! Far from it, indeed! The essential thing in concocting crab *à la créole* is to mix the crab meat and the *à la créole* thoroughly and to cook them *together*, pouring out the mixture, when it has begun to steam, upon thin slices of dry toast. That is the way crab *à la créole* is made down in Baltimore, where the art of cooking crabs reaches its highest perfection. A dish of crab meat, with creole sauce poured over it, is called there, not crab *à la créole*, but "crab meat with creole sauce." In true crab *à la créole* the mixture is infinitely intimate. Every last flake of crab meat is surrounded by its own fragments of onion, green pepper, mushroom and tomato, and the juices of these exquisite herbs go straight through it. A dish of that sublime invention drives dull care away. It is, perhaps, the most magnificent victual yet devised by mortal man—and it costs but forty cents. One may have a gallon of it, with half a dozen twelve-and-a-half-cent cigars and a case of beer, for \$2.85.

M. Gancel is wrong again when he says that soft crabs, before being fried, should be dipped in a mixture of milk and flour, or breaded in the English fashion. The English know nothing whatever about frying soft crabs, and neither do the cooks of New York. If a waiter should set before a Baltimore epicure a plate of soft crabs fried in flour or bread crumbs, there would be at once the bloodcurdling sound of a waiter's skull cracking beneath the impact of a chair leg. Such pollutions of the heavenly soft crab are regarded along the Chesapeake with an aversion approaching acute dementia. Every Ethiopian cook of both shores is well aware that there is but one way to cook the soft crab, which way consists of pinning the live reptile, by means of a large sauerkraut fork, to a slice of breakfast bacon, and of holding the two, with the bacon

up, over a quick fire. The bacon melts and its aromatic juices flood the Mediterranean of the crab and run down its legs, and it promptly dies of joy. Then the epicure engulfs it—before it has a chance to grow cold. Painful to the crab? Perhaps! But it's art!

Maybe, however, I am unjust to the excellent M. Gancel. After all, he tries to tell us in his book, not how crabs *should* be cooked, but how they *are* cooked. He is not responsible for the crimes of culinary anarchists, the blunders of ignoramuses. His aim is to give the public a sort of new Rosetta Stone for the interpretation of menu card Egyptian, and that aim he achieves in a comprehensive and masterly manner.

"REST HARROW," by Maurice Hewlett (*Scribners*, \$1.50), is the third volume in a trilogy, of which "Halfway House" and "Open Country" have gone before. Once more the central characters are the unearthly Jack Senhouse and the earthly Sanchia Percival. We behold now their gradual coming together, in spite of Jack's revolt against the forms and customs of civilization, in spite of Sanchia's startling struggle for freedom. It is settled beneath the open sky, "in the hollow of the valley." "She looked up at him laughing. She was the color of a flushed rose. 'My bride,' he said, and kissed her lips. She turned in his arm and clung to him. The storm swept surging over her; passion long pent made her shiver like a blown fire. They took their wild joy. . . ."

Jack leads her by the hand "to the shade of the valley, where the deep turf is hardly ever dry." She is bare of foot, as he is, and bare of head. In her bosom is a spray of dog roses.

"You are blue-gowned, like Despoina," says the conquered philosopher sentimentally, "and, indeed, that is your name. I am to have a fairy wife."

And then they fall to discussing ways and means, like any commonplace 'Arry and 'Arriet. "Oh, promise me!" and—curtain.

There are critics who object to Mr. Hewlett's style, calling it labored and

artificial, but as for me I find it far from fatiguing. Now and then, of course, his search for the arresting epithet, the fantastic metaphor, leads him a bit too far afield, but in general there are charms in his very vagaries. An unusual style is too often denounced out of hand as a bad style. Let us subscribe to no such narrow rules and regulations. The English of Shakespeare was unusual English, and so was the English of George Meredith.

"THE POWER AND THE GLORY," by Grace MacGowan Cooke (*Doubleday-Page*, \$1.50), starts out bravely with an intimate and interesting picture of life among the barbarous peasants of the North Carolina hills—a prelude which gives promise of an excellent story. But before that story is one-third done it transforms itself into a preposterous romance of the Laura Jean Libbey school, with a heroine whose bright eyes and honest worth lift her, almost as quickly as one can say "Jack Robinson," from bare feet to satin slippers, and an opulent hero who falls in love with her at first sight and proceeds to woo her with great condescension and magnificence. A Libbean villain plays his dastardly role in the melodrama; there is a Libbean abduction; a Libbean mine yields its untold wealth to the lowly, educating and washing them, it would seem, while it makes them rich; Libbean love making fills the air with its ravishing music. Altogether the story is intensely disappointing, not because it is Libbean—for most of the novels that come to me, in their rainbow covers and with canned reviews attached, are of that sort—but because it is by Mrs. Cooke. From an author of her evident ability we have a right to expect less ridiculous things. She has, if I do not mistake, a first hand knowledge of the life of the Southern mountaineer, and in her first chapter—and even later on in occasional episodes—she proves that she knows how to write. It is her duty, then, to give us credible and intelligible studies of the people she knows and understands—studies directed toward setting them before us as veritable human

beings, and toward helping us in some measure to see into their hearts and minds. Plenty of honest and willing numskulls stand ready to keep us supplied with best sellers.

"THE NATIVE BORN," by I. A. R. Wylie (*Bobbs-Merrill*, \$1.50), is a tale of British India. In the first chapter we see two Englishmen and their wives imprisoned in a little room, with a horde of murderous natives raging outside. The noise grows louder; the besiegers are breaking in. One of the Englishmen cocks his revolver and faces his wife. "Are you afraid?" he demands. She clings to him. "Give me both your hands," he says, "in my one hand—so. Now kiss me." Something icy cold touches her temple. She sinks to her knees and prays: "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!" There is a loud report—and a sudden, startling stillness. Then the door yields and the room fills with savages.

A scene, it appears, from the Indian Mutiny. Chapter II advances the clock a quarter of a century, but we are still in India and in the same part of it, to wit, the semi-independent state of Marut. Nehal Singh, the young rajah, mingles with the invading English and dreams of lifting his people out of their native wallow. There are many chapters of gossip, love making and station intriguing. Nehal, simple fellow, falls in love with one of the English girls and she leads him a merry dance, sneering at him in the end for his folly. Enraged beyond measure, he decides to drive the English, male and female, out of his dominions, and so another siege begins, with the promise of an outcome as bloody as that of the first one. But stay! An Englishman, more daring than the rest, stalks into Nehal's camp, and proceeds to reveal to him (Nehal) the secret of his (Nehal's) birth. He (Nehal) is not Nehal at all, but Steven Caruthers, an Englishman!

Well, well, well! You may be sure that Steven is astonished. Any man would be at the story he hears—a long and intricate tale of infidelity and lost babies, in which not only he himself but

nearly all the other personages of the story figure. It is now impossible, of course, for him to persist in his determination to exterminate the English in his satrapy, for that would involve his own suicide. So he calls off the massacre, marries the girl who once played him so false—and fades from the scene. A bulky and extremely complex fiction. Mr.—or is it Miss?—Wylie, in a prefatory note, says that it is his—or her?—first. I have read far worse firsts—but I have read far better ones.

"DR. THORNE'S IDEA," by John Ames Mitchell (*Life Pub. Co.*, \$1.00), is a new version of a tale published in 1899 under the title of "Gloria Victis." Despite its age, it is still decidedly in the movement, for its heroine, after being slain by her lover, is brought back from the dead by the mysterious stranger of "The Servant in the House," "The Passing of the Third Floor Back" and other such theological dramas of the day. "He was young, but little over thirty, and tall, with a slight stoop about the shoulders. From his simple somewhat ordinary clothes, Stephen judged him to be a master mechanic—a mason perhaps, or a carpenter. But the face was less usual. The features were regular, the eyes a dark blue and singularly gentle and expressive. A brown beard grew in two points from the chin."

"THE CAVE WOMAN," by Viola Burhans (*Holt*, \$1.50), a tale of mystery with a decidedly unhackneyed plot. The hero, taking refuge from a thunderstorm in a cave, runs full tilt into a young woman whose voice charms him, though he is unable in the darkness to see her face, and thereafter, for three hundred pages, he tries to find her again and to offer her his heart and hand. How he follows false trails, how a second woman plays a part in the chase, and how in the end he finds her in the same cave and "they claim together their second immortal moment"—all this makes a tale that will keep you awake and leave you palpitating at the close.

ANOTHER story of mystery is "THE WINDOW AT THE WHITE CAT," by

Mary Roberts Rinehart, author of "The Man in Lower Ten" and "The Circular Staircase" (*Bobbs-Merrill*, \$1.50). There are certain evidences of haste to make hay in the book—it shows less humor, for one thing, than its predecessors—but still it is well above the average of such fictions, and no doubt Mrs. Rinehart's admirers will get a lot of pleasure out of reading it. No, I am not going to tell you the plot, for such plots are spoiled by telling. Suffice it to say that it deals largely with lost jewels, and that a dashing young barrister is the hero.

THERE are few lines worth remembering, or even reading, in William Watson's new book of poems, a thin volume of less than fifty pages, entitled "SABLE AND PURPLE" (*Lane*, \$1.50). Here we have four bits of debris from the poet's workshop, stuff that should have gone into the waste basket and the fire. The first is a brief and exceedingly commonplace threnody upon the death of Edward VII, the sort of thing that any fairly talented young rhapsodist might have written; the second is an uninteresting dramatic scene in blank verse, with King Alfred as protagonist; the third is a banal ode to the sea, relieved by a few picturesque epithets; and the fourth—and perhaps best—is a twenty-four-line defiance of England's foes, in unhappy imitation of the Kipling manner. Even at his worst, of course, Watson shows a certain suavity and craftsmanship. It would be a sheer impossibility for him to write so atrociously as Alfred Austin. But in the present book, alas, his poetical plumb bob comes very near the bottom. It is a book that his admirers—and who of us is not of them?—will not care to talk about.

THE Cochrane Publishing Company objects to the fact that a book called "Neither Do I" was credited to it in the October number. The objection is sound, for the volume really bears the imprint of another firm, and so I offer my regrets for the error, with assurances that it was entirely due to a slip of the typewriter.

SHOPPING FOR THE SMART SET

By MARION C. TAYLOR

WELL, I have looked at so many gowns, hats, wraps and furs just as they came out of their boxes that I am bewildered. There is so much to tell about, so many new points to be noted and so many wonderful things to be described, I feel as though I could write for a month and still leave much unsaid.

I said last month—and I was writing at the end of August—that September was just a tiny bit early to be absolutely sure of anything, but the end of September is about here, and with it has arrived a perfect avalanche of clothes. I still think that many of the things will appear later—it is an established fact that the houses abroad are apt to bring out their *pièces de resistance* after the American buyers have returned—but with a constant stream of models, letters and cables coming over we manage to keep well abreast of the *dernier cri*, although I do believe that the average well-gowned American woman is a trifle slow in adopting a foreign mode. I hate to admit it but it seems indisputable. I could name a hundred instances of it, one of the most timely being the bead-embroidery craze which I mentioned some months ago. Paris was in throes of it last spring and summer, and the epidemic is just about to start in seriously over here now. Short coats furnish another instance of it—although the explanation may be that the American has always shown a greater fondness for long coats. However, I firmly expected, as I said last month, to see really short coats in great demand over here this fall and winter, and I have seen some, to be sure, but the majority are 32 to 36 inches at least, although I

haven't given up the idea by any means. I think the tide is in that direction and predict that they are due here soon. In fact, I shouldn't be surprised to see them before the end of the winter, although possibly it will take spring to bring them. I know of one very exclusive fur house that intends importing a few very short models in seal and mole and I think the indications point that way; however, I am taking a purely personal view.

Many points of fashion have been definitely decided upon for the winter, which I shall mention before I start in to describe clothes themselves.

One very new idea is woolen embroidery. Mme. Paquin wore at her opening a gown of black satin and king-blue satin, the overskirt of the black draped up at the side and trimmed with round flat blue buttons and loops; the yoke, which ran straight across and was collarless, was of king-blue chiffon, which, hemstitched, also formed the under sleeves. The rather wide kimono sleeves were quite short, and were embroidered at the bottom in the very brightest reds, blues, yellows and greens in this very smart and very new woolen embroidery, which is one of the features bound to be a huge success. The other distinct innovation on this gown was the sash in back; around the waist of the gown was a four- or five-inch draped girdle of the satin; in back hung two flat tabs of black velvet about three inches wide that appeared again at the top of the girdle, where they formed a square—simply crossed over, with mitred corners. These loose flat tabs hanging in back are another feature of the winter models; they run from narrow double

velvet ones to single ones of material of the gown, and are often twelve or fifteen inches wide, frequently forming the train on evening gowns and hanging quite loose from the waist down. I have seen just as many gowns with collars as without, but almost every yoke I have seen is of chiffon cloth, frequently showing one of the colors used on the gown at the top of the collar. If it is a combined black and white gown, and many of these are shown, the yoke is more apt to be of the black chiffon with the white showing at the top.

Gowns and Coats

As I said last month, I have seen few hobble skirts. To be sure, many, in fact almost all, of the skirts are draped, generally caught in at the sides or back, but I think the bands running round the bottom confining the gathers are absolutely out. I also spoke of bead embroidery last month. Let me underline it now. It is everywhere, the porcelain beads being newer than the glass ones, round and tubular both being popular and a dozen different kinds and colors used at one time. But while I have seen some *moiré*, a handsome evening gown and wrap of *Callôt* being of the very dark green *moiré*, the wrap trimmed with fitch fur, I do not see as much of it as I predicted a couple of months ago. Evidently this is one of the cases where the American buyers preferred not to be dictated to and did not especially care for the French suggestion.

Metallic trimming of every description is seen on gowns, wraps and hats. I think silver and steel are slightly more popular than gold, although the latter is good too. In fact, one of the handsomest gowns I saw in a leading dry-goods shop, whose models are justly renowned for their exclusiveness, was a dull gold satin, empire with straight lines, having a tunic of a single straight piece of soft taupe chiffon hanging loosely in front and back, showing a delicate arrangement of gold lace underneath. This tunic was edged with skunk and caught at either side near the bottom with dull gold ornaments. It

was delicately embroidered in tiny white porcelain beads. The whole gown charmed me with its soft and beautiful coloring which was unique, and its quiet dignity was typical of Drécoll. At this house I saw a coat of Paul Poiret's showing this same effect of mole and gold with the addition of silver. The body of the coat, a soft gray satin between a taupe and a mole, hung straight and scant in the most accepted fashion, and was marvelously embroidered in gold and silver, not glaring or startling embroidery, but rich, heavy and antique, while the lining of old gold carried out the effect. It was one of the most conservative creations of Poiret's I have seen, but none the less beautiful.

Coats are almost all scant and straight, striking the hips and in this manner suggesting the lines of the figure. Most of them have shawllike revers, frequently of fur, a great many of them being caught up at the side front closing, and often held in place by an antique clasp or an ornament of some sort. A new idea is a band of fur which fits close around the neck and has a long narrow stolelike piece often ended by a metallic tassel which is worn thrown over the shoulder and hangs down in back. The most popular colors seem to be purple, king blue and a dark dull green similar to *réséda*. Tapestry fabric with metallic threads running through it, cashmere shawls and wonderful embossed velvets are all shown. Frequently a coat is formed of two materials, the bottom of velvet, the top of perhaps a soft taffeta or a tapestry fabric—the latter generally veiled in chiffon. Nearly all of them have fur collars, skunk leading, with fox and fitch (a new-old fur of the *maarten* family which *Callôt* has introduced and is showing on everything) running a close second, but which I personally think most ugly. I hardly saw one but had a metal braid or lace facing at the edge of the lining. Worth shows a new idea that is quite charming and practical, a tiny shirred bag or pocket suspended at the side from the lining for one's opera glasses.

In the spring Francis showed a few of the royal purple and cerise combina-

tions which although a trifle bizarre seem to be liked, and so I see they are showing them again. A very smart evening gown of theirs is accompanied by quite a wonderful wrap of royal purple velvet embroidered at the cuffs and on the huge revers with cerise silk and edged with skunk. Many of the wraps show large shirred sleeves which commence at the waistline on either side of the back panel. Others have rather plain, loose, straight sleeves, the arm-holes almost always being outlined with a self-covered cord. But I saw one coat from Gerson of Berlin, the sleeves of which were quite narrow. The upper body of the coat was of silver cloth fabric with large dull-toned roses in pastel coloring scattered over its surface. It was banded at the knee by skunk, and again at the bottom. Between the bands was a hem of old blue velvet, which also formed the long straight cuffs to the elbow, buttoning with antique gold buttons and loops. The upper part of the sleeves which was narrow and slightly puffed at the elbow, was of the silver fabric. The coat closed high at the neck with a skunk band, and an end which was worn thrown over the shoulder. Quite odd and distinctly new with its narrow straight silhouette.

Before I return to the novelties of the season that I started in to tell you about, I may say in regard to colors, they are using *all* colors. If you happen to care for a certain shade, and find it becoming, wear it with perfect surety that you are correct, for any beautiful color is smart this season. Of course there are favorites. Just at present king blue—that bright, beautiful, vivid blue—is, I think, the most popular, which argues of course for an early death. All the corals, tomatoes, cerises and the like—mostly the warmer ones—run it a close second. The red-brown I spoke of last month, *modoré*, is a favorite of Drécoll and Paquin—in fact several browns, dark ones, are good. Drécoll and Francis are also favoring purple. I think it's quite wonderful for elaborate wraps or used sparingly with black, or possibly as a lining, but otherwise I shouldn't advise it as it's a dangerous color to tam-

per with and one rather hard to wear. Black and white combinations, as I said last month, are still good. For evening clothes one sees them with touches of any of the brilliant colors, generally lightened up with silver or steel. Mole, smoke, dull old blue and certain amethyst shades are all good, but there you see to what lengths the list is running, and there are many more I might add.

A new idea on evening gowns is the use of heavy satin unhemmed, with its selvage showing. I saw a draped gown of orange (a color which I wouldn't be at all surprised to see revived to popularity) that showed this selvage idea. It originally started with chiffons this spring and evidently was a success. Many evening gowns show a tiny metallic cord at the waistline, tying in front in a bow with tassels. This is typical of Paul Poiret, who started it in the spring. One sees it on his hats too. Skunk and fox are about the only furs used on evening gowns, the latter frequently forming a wide band around the foot. Skirts are still scant, and few long trains are shown.

Venise lace, of which I spoke last month, is used on everything.

Suits

For suits there are many new fabrics. Rough English serges are favored by Paquin and Poiret—the latter shows a short-waisted Norfolk—and Bernard. Among the new fabrics, whose names are mostly meaningless, are many of uneven rough surfaces not unlike the chin-chilla cloth that children's coats are made of, lighter in weight but having that same surface. I think the best suit colors I have seen are very dark blue (practically midnight blue), seal brown—Paquin shows the latter in velvet with a pin stripe of black—and the bright coral or tomato shades. In this latter color in a very light weight serge I saw a Weeks' gown and wrap. The gown was bead-embroidered in the brightest colors around the bottom above a narrow black velvet hem—which is also a new feature—and also around the neck and

sleeves, the whole costume being quite adorable for a youthful wearer.

Two Smart Serge Costumes

I mentioned the demand for smart walking dresses last month, and also ventured the opinion that really good models were scarce, but in my search I have discovered two that I think are just as good as they can be. Both happened to be in blue serge, although they would lend themselves to almost any material. The first, a Paquin model, was the coarse-twilled serge I spoke of a moment ago, whose surface sheds the dust, they tell me, and is not so apt to wear shiny. The gown had a square Dutch neck, a tiny bit lower in front than in back, and one could of course add a chemisette at will. It opened down the side front in the fashion I spoke of last month. The front of the gown was princess in effect, just following the lines of the figure. A two-inch band of fancy black silk braid outlined this closing to a point midway between the knee and hip, where it slanted sharply to the center front to knee depth, forming a point there and again running up and around to one side, where it dropped to the bottom of the skirt. Just inside the point in the front and next to the braid at the side back was a smart design in black braiding. The skirt had two scant side plaits on either side in back, which just gave enough fullness for comfort in walking. The waist bloused quite decidedly in back over a little half-belt—and now I am coming to the really smart part of the gown. This little belt, which hardly reached across the back, was formed of an inset of dull old blue linen, long and narrow, with pointed ends. It was outlined with the black braid, and at either end were two bullet-shaped red china buttons with white dots, just such buttons as one saw thirty or more years ago. This old blue linen showed in a square inset at the back of the neck, and a little of it appeared in front, outlined of course by the wide black braid. Right across the opening of the neck in front and running down a few inches was a

two-inch embroidered band showing many soft shades of blue and green and a little red to liven it up and match the buttons, which again appeared at the edge of this band. The sleeves were the old bell sleeve (another revival, but one of whose success I am doubtful) and reached between elbow and wrist. They showed a treatment of braid, a blue linen inset trimmed with some small bullet-shaped black satin buttons and more of the china buttons of course. Below was a valenciennes lace ruffle. Except for the sleeves, I think the dress was, as I said, just as good as it could be.

The second dress of Drécoll was of a finer serge trimmed with black satin. It also opened down the side front, but its attractive feature was a collar, which was quite wide and pointed at the shoulders, but narrow and rounding in back, of brilliant Oriental silk embroidery showing the really Persian colorings of vivid cerise and green and that pale lemon yellow. The pattern of the embroidery also displayed distinctly Oriental tendencies. It appeared again in bandlike cuffs to the tomato-colored, full chiffon undersleeves and was the only relief from the somberness of the gown. I have seen a number of checked, striped and pin-dotted velvet walking dresses—most of them either braided with wide, flat, fancy soutache or black satin trimmed. They are really of velutina, a material soft, flexible and satisfactory in every way that has almost taken the place of velvet. The very handsomest wraps and gowns are made of it. Most of the velvet walking dresses are of dark colors—browns, greens and blues.

Satins seem preëminent for formal afternoon wear, with some velvets and chiffons, frequently all three being combined in one costume. Most of the velvets are fur-trimmed. A smart green one from Paul Poiret had natural lynx trimming. Another of his models had a wide band of that coarse crocheted lace at the bottom edged with fox, but I thought it just a little bizarre. However, this lace is going to be just as popular as Venetian, and maline lace still holds its own, by the way.

Furs

I can almost say the same of furs that I did of colors. Almost all furs will be worn. The most popular for scarfs and muffs are the long-haired furs—all the foxes, skunk, Fisher, raccoon and the like, not forgetting Australian opossum, which is still with us after its enormous vogue last season, and, if one is careful to select good blue skins, is not common. The new furs, in the sense that they will be smartest this season are red fox, which is either very becoming or hideous—I think that decided brunettes or women whose eyes are dark and whose hair, although light, has a suggestion of warmth in it are the only ones who should attempt it—Fitch, which as I said before, I consider very ugly and unbecoming—and I hear that Paquin refused absolutely to show it, badger, a slightly lighter fur than natural lynx—which is also good—and lastly, monkey fur, which, treated properly, is just as smart as it can be if Americans would only realize it. Parisians are running it along with mole, the latter, of course, for formal wear only, and then I have seen quite a little leopard. Later I shall tell you of a suit trimmed with it and also describe a charming stole and collar of monkey fur. One sees less mink, chinchilla, ermine, and the like made up for wear with suits and walking costumes. We seem to have put them in the class with mole, seal and other furs more suitable for dress, although nothing is in better taste than handsome mink or maarten for any time of the day or night.

For afternoon and evening wear the furs are growing more elaborately beautiful each season, and the flat stoles of last winter have become longer and wider, with more shawl-like tendencies, while the muffs, frequently showing chiffon at the back, are if anything larger and softer. The idea is charming and, as a friend from abroad writes me, the women simply wrap themselves up in the furs, and with the huge muffs and low hats coming far down on the head there is nothing to be seen of the wearer but bright eyes and brilliant complexion, if she has chosen her fur correctly.

I love furs—they soften and beautify the ugliest woman—but it is surprising how few women display any judgment in selecting them. I mean in this respect: Husband comes home with a cheque and tells his wife to pick out some furs for herself. Possibly they sit down and discuss what furs she will get, and it is equally possible that she can't make up her mind between skunk and chinchilla. She may be a rather colorless woman with blue eyes and light brown hair, an ash blonde I believe you would call her. To a woman of this type chinchilla, badger, opossum, in fact any light grayish fur, would be fatal, while skunk or even a softer brown fur would soften her face, darken her eyes and improve her to such a great extent that her husband would be quite cheerful when the bill came. But invariably her dearest friend has chinchilla, and being dark and having rather brilliant coloring, looks well in it, and she can see no reason why she may not expect a similar result. It is the old story, of course, but I think it's rather more apt to happen in furs than in any other line.

It is only within the last few years that we are being educated up to them. Now we realize that fur fashions change each season just as quickly as gowns and hats. Unfortunately the price of furs mounts steadily upward each year and there seems no possibility for any different outlook. There is but one ray of hope. It is quite fashionable to use any and all furs, the French having taught us the many charming effects obtained with the cheaper and even imitation furs. I saw a coat the other day in possibly the largest fur house in New York (an establishment with branches all over the world, whose advanced ideas have really gone a long way toward educating us in fur possibilities) of what I supposed was ermine, long and straight, trimmed with tails toward the bottom with a shawl collar of what I took to be skunk and a band of it which ran around the bottom and up the front. It wasn't until I remarked that the skunk seemed a little coarse that I was informed that the coat was of white coney and the revers, etc., of dyed raccoon. You have no

idea how really good the result was, the idea being that it made a lovely evening coat for a young girl, or in fact, for anyone who wished the warmth of fur with the delicate beauty of ermine and didn't care to invest a fortune. It was in this establishment that I saw the scarf and muff of monkey—combined with black satin and chiffon, it was soft, silky, becoming and so smart. They showed me many odd combinations in these flat scarfs. One of the newest and most attractive was of broadtail, velvet and tailless ermine—the latter used as a lining. Another novelty was a set of black fox trimmed with black and white ostrich. A wonderful coat of flat caracul was trimmed with wide black silk braid, spangled and beaded, and had odd black velvet bishop sleeves from the elbow down. Its lining was a royal blue velour. Still another of caracul showed wide stripes of silk braid running the entire length of it. The linings are gradually running toward stripes, the Paisley idea giving way before them.

A large fur house on the Avenue, famous for the reliability of its goods and the saneness of its styles showed me a very good coat of caracul trimmed with seal, the idea of using that particular combination being rather new and the design of the coat even more so. The seal formed the bottom of the coat and ran up in points against the caracul—the idea being repeated in the cuffs and collar. Another good model whose outline was straight and scant, much like the evening coats of other fabrics, was of seal with a band of skunk around the outer edge and another at knee depth. But the handsomest one I saw here was of ermine with a collar square in the front and rounding in back, of chinchilla edged with the ermine—tailless, of course. The idea was repeated in the cuffs and chinchilla buttons trimmed it at the bottom. The lining, carrying out the idea, was of a soft smoky chiffon shirred and edged with tiny plaited ruffles over white satin. Truly the linings are marvelous this season, this house showing some wonderful brocades with metal threads that are works of art.

In still another Avenue shop I saw some very smart sets of natural gray fox mounted on black chiffon over king blue, the satin and chiffon showing between the fur bands. I also saw here a coat that deserves a little paragraph to itself—a copy of the coat Sir Henry Irving wore in the play, "Robespierre," with its capelike top running into long points in the back, and its huge revers. It was done in a flat caracul handsomely braided to further carry out the idea, and the result was quite picturesque. They also showed here a wonderful moleskin coat, the tiny skins worked into a pattern of squares, which served as a border edging the garment. This idea of working the skins into patterns, stripes or squares, is a charming one. I saw a scarf of French seal made into vertical stripes (the skins running in opposite directions) which was at once conservative and up to date.

Typically Parisian

The Callôts have sent over an onion brown walking suit of one of those Scotch tweeds that Paris has gone mad over. It's rather amusing—the English woman, and the American too, has always been in favor of these loosely woven cheviots and tweeds, but it's only recently that the Parisian would accept them, and now, as usual, Paris is quite in love with the idea, and the extremists like Callôt and Poiret are using them almost to the exclusion of the finer weaves. They are sharing the vogue of patine, which after several seasons has finally found its way over here.

But to return to the Callôt suit. It has rather large rounding revers, which run into a small round collar of leopard skin, with a band of the material at the edge and the turnback cuffs also show the fur. It tones well with the color of the cloth and is new and smart. Almost all the winter suits gain distinction from their fancy collars. Most of these are embroidered in charming colors, with a touch of silver or gold, and fur is frequently worked in. Flat caracul, mole, seal, leopard, in fact any flat fur is good. But it is in the coloring that the beauty

lies—as many as six and seven shades being successfully blended and giving just the necessary touch to liven up an otherwise somber effect.

Sumptuous Wraps

There is no other word suitable for them, they are so elaborately beautiful. One house in New York is showing a wonderful line of them, each more beautiful than the last and every one bearing the label of a famous house abroad. Poiret has sent some of the handsomest this season, straight and narrow, with shawl collars and bands of skunk. I saw an odd *réséda* green plush one of his, rather fuller than most, with a deep hoodlike collar and revers of a cashmere shawl edged with silver braid. Francis has sent over a very charming black satin dress to this shop, which is accompanied by a wrap. The idea of sending wraps to accompany frocks is a growing one. Callôt, Francis, Weeks and a few other houses are invariably doing so, and Poiret shows most of his frocks with hats, which seems to me a good idea. I feel sure that eventually a woman will not think of buying a frock alone, but will buy a costume which will include all the necessary accessories, shoes, hat and a wrap of some sort. It is really the only proper thing, for one is so apt to ruin an effect by a poor selection of millinery or an incongruous outer wrap.

But to return to the Francis costume: The gown was a satin *crêpe*, the skirt being rather scant and plain, and was trimmed with a wide band which formed a high point in front trimmed with round, flat, self-covered buttons. In back, one of those wide loose panels I spoke about a few moments ago was rounded out bird tail fashion at the bottom of the skirt, and on each end was a tassel. The waist was a peasant style of blouse, button-trimmed, with a yoke of white chiffon showing a band of black around the top. The sleeves were plain, rather loose and quite straight to a little below the elbow. A wide white satin cuff showed above the black one, both trimmed with self-covered buttons.

The girdle was a rather wide, soft, crushed one with a band of the white satin showing at the top, and at the left back was a horse's rosette of plaited black satin finished in the center with a white satin button. The coat which accompanied it was of the satin, having a very deep round shawl collar edged with velvet. Its corners rounded off in front and the fullness in back was gathered into a wide band—which also ran around and up the front—finished with three large buttons, giving the effect of buttoning over. The costume was so refined and exclusive that I'm sure it will prove one of the best models.

Hats

There is a smart shop just off the Avenue where they make a specialty of charming little hats suitable for walking, driving and motoring. They have a splendid idea of measuring the customer's head and really fitting the hat to it, so that there is no danger of that annoying question as to just where the hat is reposing—on one ear being the usual result, after a few gusts of our November winds have struck it. I saw here an odd combination of Nattier blue and amethyst, the crown of loops of ribbon. Another was of black velvet with touches of crimson.

For wear with suits and walking gowns velour hats with just a suggestion of trimming are new and smart, the so-called velour resembling plush but being a peculiar millinery fabric unlike the usual upholstery velour.

The charming little hats sitting far down on the head are going to have an early death, as are also those of tapestry fabrics, these latter having been copied already in the "ready to wear" department.

In the shop I spoke of a moment ago they show many hats accompanied by boas and muffs. A Poiret hat was of black hatter's plush with a velvet facing, the crown being entirely hidden by a white ostrich band which was wound around it spirally. It showed a tiny bit of marabout occasionally, and the flat scarf of black chiffon edged with

black satin over white satin also showed a tiny sort of over-collar of the feathers extending just around the neck and showing below an arrangement of tiny satin roses hanging loosely. The ostrich and marabout also edged the bottom.

Stockings

Spring is the season *par excellence* for novelties in stockings, for, of course, we no sooner think of low shoes than our minds are open for suggestions in stocking novelties. But in these days when almost as many low as high shoes are worn for dress in winter there is always a chance for anything attractive in the stocking line. They tell me that women abroad invariably wear stockings to match their gowns, with black shoes—and you do see a little of it here, but personally I do not like it. I wonder if I am behindhand? To me it is ugly—a colored stocking above a black shoe, no matter how fine, always has a tendency to make the ankle large, and there is something rather startling about the harsh color contrast that has always seemed to me extremely ugly. However, at a shop where they probably sell more stockings than in any other place in town they tell me that women are buying king blue stockings, which would seem to indicate that someone disagrees with me.

Openwork stockings have come back in style this last season or so and some of the designs are quite beautiful. A favorite of mine is a very fine black silk with an openwork clock, giving the effect of fine hemstitching. A new idea for particular people, and suggestive of a trousseau especially, is to have one's initials or name woven in the top of the stocking in this dropstitch. It is neater than the initials to be sewed on and is "something new." For evening wear the stockings will of course match the slippers and gown. I presume we shall see quantities of gold and silver effects—the latter I much prefer—as this is certainly a metallic season. Bronze is always a wise selection when in doubt, being especially good for restaurant and theater wear.

New Music Records for November

There is a universal appeal about the quaint old-fashioned airs that endears them to so many people, and two of the most charming have appeared in the list of November records. "Sally in Our Alley," with its odd and beautiful melody, is sung by George Hamlin and is a really successful record, and the "Erminie" lullaby, which has never lost its charm for me. Mr. Barbour, who sings it, has a voice of sufficient warmth to bring out the tone quality of the song. This latter comes in a double record, on the reverse side of which is another old time air, "Good-bye, Sweet Day," which is also quaint and appealing.

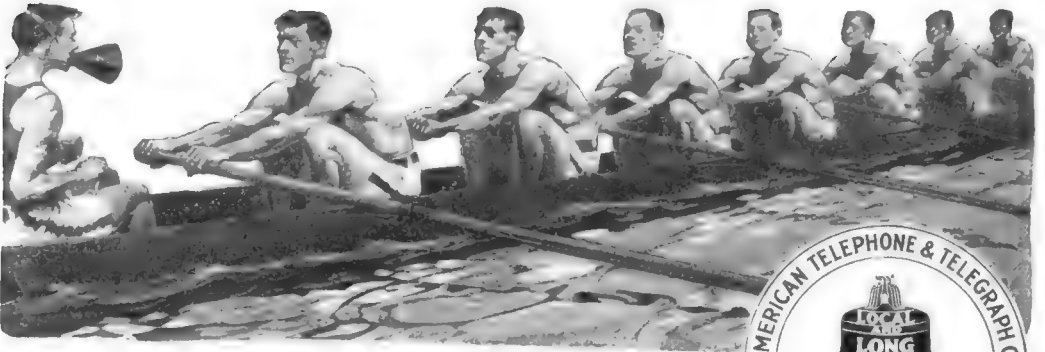
Then I liked a charming Massenet ballad in French, "O Si les Fleurs Avaient les Yeux," sung by Frances Alda. It has a rather haunting minor air that is distinctly attractive and typical of Massenet.

Fritz Kreisler has contributed Tschai-cowsky's "Chanson Sans Paroles," which is bound to be liked, the player and the selection being equally popular. I think nothing is better than a good violin or cello record, and they tell me nothing was originally harder to produce.

Maud Powell has a new one, too, a "Will-o'-the-Wisp" of Sauret, which is quite wonderful from the standpoint of technique, as the name might cause you to suspect.

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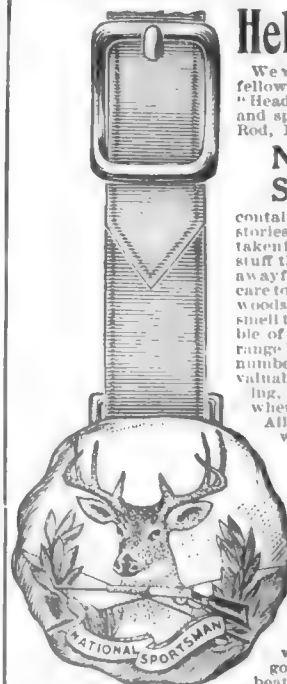
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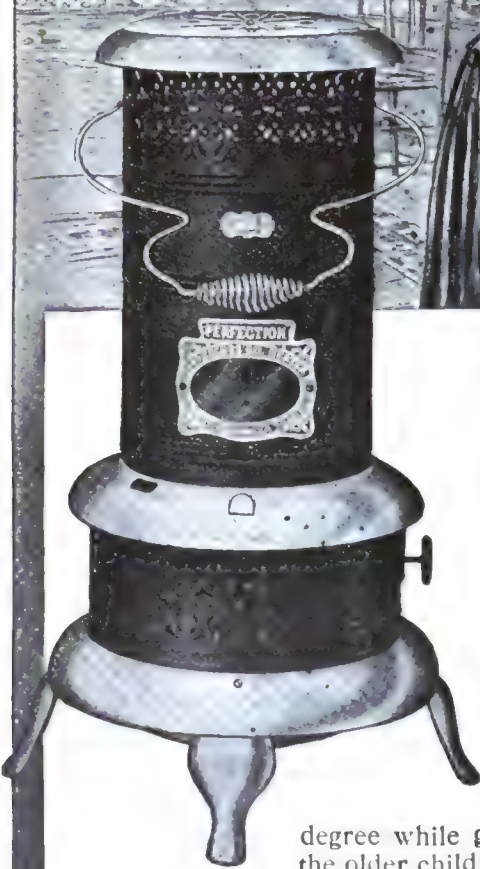
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The American - - - - -	1.50	
Cosmopolitan - - - - -	1.50	
Total,	\$6.00	
THE SMART SET - -	\$3.00	\$3⁵⁰
Cosmopolitan - - - - -	1.50	
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Total,	\$6.00	
THE SMART SET - -	\$3.00	\$4⁵⁰
Scribner's - - - - -	3.00	
Total,	\$6.00	
THE SMART SET - -	\$3.00	\$3⁵⁰
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Total,	\$6.00	
THE SMART SET - -	\$3.00	\$3⁵⁰
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Magazine	Reg. Price	Our Price Now
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